

AUGUST.

NUMBERS 119 TO 123.

1861.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

SHAKESPEARE.

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# ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY

## CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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### PART 28.

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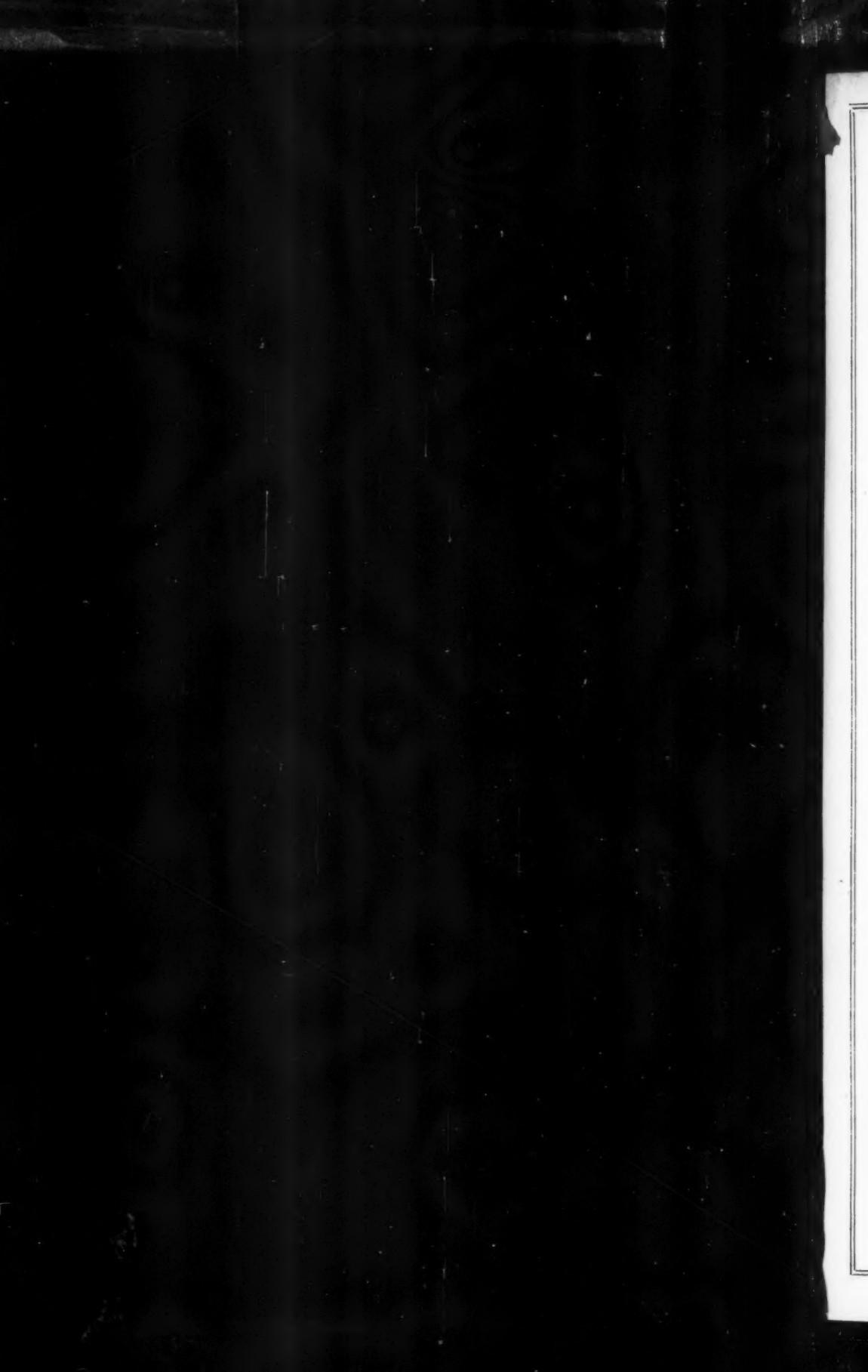
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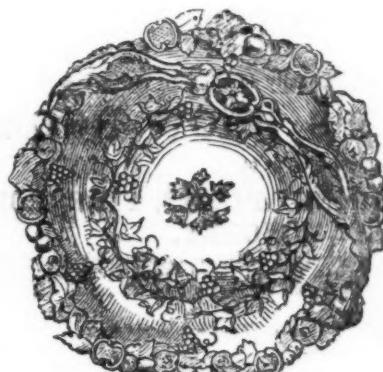
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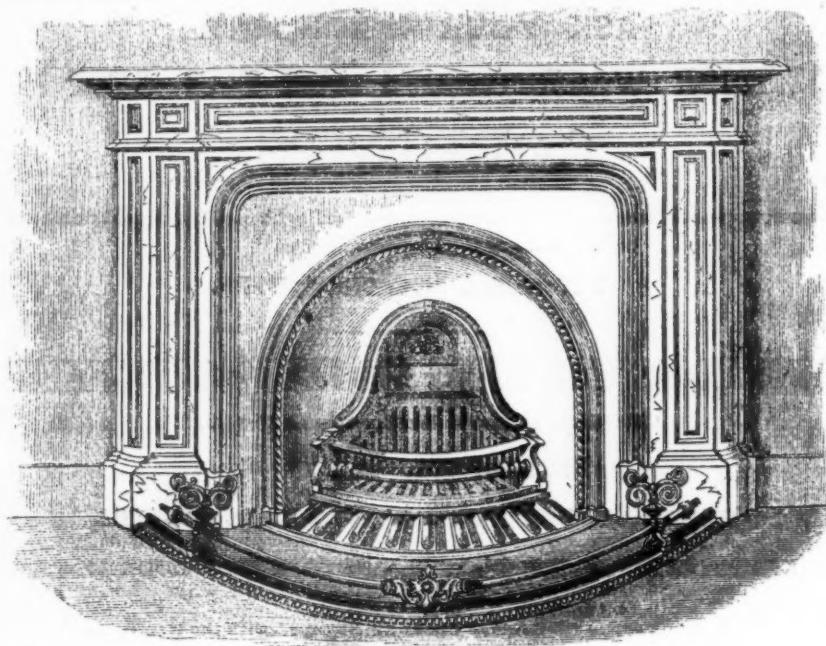
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SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 1861.

[PRICE 2*d.*

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

### CHAPTER LVIII.

THE tidings of my high fortunes having had a heavy fall, had got down to my native place and its neighbourhood, before I got there. I found the Blue Boar in possession of the intelligence, and I found that it made a great change in the Boar's demeanour. Whereas the Boar had cultivated my good opinion with warm assiduity when I was coming into property, the Boar was exceedingly cool on the subject now that I was going out of property.

It was evening when I arrived, much fatigued by the journey I had so often made so easily. The Boar could not put me into my usual bedroom, which was engaged (probably by some one who had expectations), and could only assign me a very indifferent chamber among the pigeons and post-chaises up the yard. But, I had as sound a sleep in that lodging as in the most superior accommodation the Boar could have given me, and the quality of my dreams was about the same as in the best bedroom.

Early in the morning while my breakfast was getting ready, I strolled round by Satis House. There were printed bills on the gate, and on bits of carpet hanging out of the windows, announcing a sale by auction of the Household Furniture and Effects, next week. The House itself was to be sold as old building materials and pulled down. Lot 1 was marked in white-washed knock-kneed letters on the brewhouse; Lot 2 on that part of the main building which had been so long shut up. Other lots were marked off on other parts of the structure, and the ivy had been torn down to make room for the inscriptions, and much of it trailed low in the dust and was withered already. Stepping in for a moment at the open gate and looking around me with the uncomfortable air of a stranger who had no business there, I saw the auctioneer's clerk walking on the casks and telling them off for the information of a catalogue-compiler, pen in hand, who made a temporary desk of the wheeled chair I had so often pushed along to the tune of Old Clem.

When I got back to my breakfast in the Boar's coffee-room, I found Mr. Pumblechook conversing with the landlord. Mr. Pumblechook (not improved in appearance by his late noc-

turnal adventure) was waiting for me, and addressed me in the following terms.

"Young man, I am sorry to see you brought low. But what else could be expected! What else could be expected!"

As he extended his hand with a magnificently forgiving air, and as I was broken by illness and unfit to quarrel, I took it.

"William," said Mr. Pumblechook to the waiter, "put a muffin on table. And has it come to this! Has it come to this!"

I frownedly sat down to my breakfast. Mr. Pumblechook stood over me, and poured out my tea—before I could touch the teapot—with the air of a benefactor who was resolved to be true to the last.

"William," said Mr. Pumblechook, mournfully, "put the salt on. In happier times," addressing me, "I think you took sugar? And did you take milk? You did. Sugar and milk. William, bring a watercress."

"Thank you," said I, shortly, "but I don't eat watercresses."

"You don't eat 'em," returned Mr. Pumblechook, sighing and nodding his head several times, as if he might have expected that, and as if abstinence from watercresses were consistent with my downfall. "True. The simple fruits of the earth. No. You needn't bring any, William."

I went on with my breakfast, and Mr. Pumblechook continued to stand over me, staring fishily and breathing noisily, as he always did.

"Little more than skin and bone!" mused Mr. Pumblechook, aloud. "And yet when he went away from here (I may say with my blessing), and I spread afore him my humble store, like the Bee, he was as plump as a Peach!"

This reminded me of the wonderful difference between the servile manner in which he had offered his hand in my new prosperity, saying, "May I?" and the ostentatious clemency with which he had just now exhibited the same fat five fingers.

"Hah!" he went on, handing me the bread-and-butter. "And air you a going to Joseph?"

"In Heaven's name," said I, firing in spite of myself, "what does it matter to you where I am going? Leave that teapot alone."

It was the worst course I could have taken, because it gave Pumblechook the opportunity he wanted.

"Yes, young man," said he, releasing the

handle of the article in question, retiring a step or two from my table, and speaking for the be-hoof of the landlord and waiter at the door, "I will leave that teapot alone. You are right, young man. For once, you are right. I forgot myself when I take such an interest in your breakfast, as to wish your frame, exhausted by the debilitating effects of prodigality, to be stimulated by the 'olesome nourishment of your forefathers. And yet," said Pumblechook, turning to the landlord and waiter, and pointing me out at arm's length, "this is him as I ever sported with in his days of happy infancy. Tell me not it cannot be; I tell you this is him!"

A low murmur from the two replied. The waiter appeared to be particularly affected.

"This is him," said Pumblechook, "as I have rode in my shay-cart. This is him as I have seen brought up by hand. This is him untoe the sister of which I was uncle by marriage, as her name was Georgiana M'ria from her own mother, let him deny it if he can!"

The waiter seemed convinced that I could not deny it, and that it gave the case a black look.

"Young man," said Pumblechook, screwing his head at me in the old fashion, "you air a going to Joseph. What does it matter to me, you ask me, where you air a going? I say to you, sir, you air a going to Joseph."

The waiter coughed, as if he modestly invited me to get over that.

"Now," said Pumblechook, and all this with a most exasperating air of saying in the cause of virtue what was perfectly convincing and conclusive, "I will tell you what to say to Joseph. Here is Squires of the Boar present, known and respected in this town, and here is William, which his father's name was Potkins if I do not deceive myself."

"You do not, sir," said William.

"In their presence," pursued Pumblechook, "I will tell you, young man, what to say to Joseph. Says you, 'Joseph, I have this day seen my earliest benefactor and the founder of my fortun's. I will name no names, Joseph, but so they are pleased to call him up-town, and I have seen that man.'"

"I swear I don't see him here," said I.

"Say that likewise," retorted Pumblechook. "Say you said that, and even Joseph will probably betray surprise."

"There you quite mistake him," said I. "I know better."

"Says you," Pumblechook went on, "Joseph, I have seen that man, and that man bears you no malice and bears me no malice. He knows your character, Joseph, and is well acquainted with your pig-headedness and ignorance; and he knows my character, Joseph, and he knows my want of gratitooде. Yes, Joseph, says you," here Pumblechook shook his head and hand at me, "'he knows my total deficiency of common human gratitooде. He knows it, Joseph, as none can. You do not know it, Joseph, having no call to know it, but that man do.'"

Windy donkey as he was, it really amazed

me that he could have the face to talk thus to mine.

"Says you, 'Joseph, he gave me a little message, which I will now repeat. It was, that in my being brought low, he saw the finger of Providence. He knew that finger when he saw it, Joseph, and he saw it plain. It pintered out this writing, Joseph. *Reward of ingrati-toode to earliest benefactor, and founder of fortun's.* But that man said that he did not repent of what he had done, Joseph. Not at all. It was right to do it, it was kind to do it, it was benevolent to do it, and he would do it again."

"It's a pity," said I, scornfully, as I finished my interrupted breakfast, "that the man did not say what he had done and would do again."

"Squires of the Boar!" Pumblechook was now addressing the landlord, "and William! I have no objections to your mentioning, either up-town or down-town, if such should be your wishes, that it was right to do it, kind to do it, benevolent to do it, and that I would do it again."

With those words the Impostor shook them both by the hand, with an air, and left the house; leaving me much more astonished than delighted by the virtues of that same indefinite "it." I was not long after him in leaving the house too, and when I went down the High-street I saw him holding forth (no doubt to the same effect) at his shop door, to a select group, who honoured me with very unfavourable glances as I passed on the opposite side of the way.

But, it was only the pleasanter to turn to Biddy and to Joe, whose great forbearance shone more brightly than before, if that could be, contrasted with this brazen pretender. I went towards them slowly, for my limbs were weak, but with a sense of increasing relief as I drew nearer to them, and a sense of leaving arrogance and untruthfulness further and further behind.

The June weather was delicious. The sky was blue, the larks were soaring high over the green corn, I thought all that country-side more beautiful and peaceful by far than I had ever known it to be yet. Many pleasant pictures of the life that I would lead there, and of the change for the better that would come over my character when I had a guiding spirit at my side whose simple faith and clear home-wisdom I had proved, beguiled my way. They awakened a tender emotion in me; for, my heart was softened by my return, and such a change had come to pass, that I felt like one who was toiling home barefoot from distant travel and whose wanderings had lasted many years.

The schoolhouse where Biddy was mistress, I had never seen; but, the little roundabout lane by which I entered the village for quietness' sake, took me past it. I was disappointed to find that the day was a holiday; no children were there, and Biddy's house was closed. Some hopeful notion of seeing her busily engaged in her daily duties, before she saw me, had been in my mind and was defeated.

But, the forge was a very short distance off, and I went towards it under the sweet green limes, listening for the clink of Joe's hammer. Long after I ought to have heard it, and long after I had fancied I heard it and found it but a fancy, all was still. The limes were there, and the white thorns were there, and the chestnut-trees were there, and their leaves rustled harmoniously when I stopped to listen; but, the clink of Joe's hammer was not in the midsummer wind.

Almost fearing, without knowing why, to come in view of the forge, I saw it at last, and saw that it was closed. No gleam of fire, no glittering shower of sparks, no roar of bellows; all shut up, and still.

But, the house was not deserted, and the best parlour seemed to be in use, for there were white curtains fluttering in its window, and the window was open and gay with flowers. I went softly towards it, meaning to peep over the flowers, when Joe and Biddy stood before me, arm in arm.

At first Biddy gave a cry, as if she thought it was my apparition, but in another moment she was in my embrace. I wept to see her, and she wept to see me; I, because she looked so fresh and pleasant; she, because I looked so worn and white.

"Dear Biddy, how smart you are!"

"Yes, dear Pip."

"And Joe, how smart you are!"

"Yes, dear old Pip, old chap."

I looked at both of them, from one to the other, and then—

"It's my wedding-day," cried Biddy, in a burst of happiness, "and I am married to Joe!"

They had taken me into the kitchen, and I had laid my head down on the old deal table. Biddy held one of my hands to her lips, and Joe's restoring touch was on my shoulder. "Which he warn't strong enough, my dear, fur to be surprised," said Joe. And Biddy said, "I ought to have thought of it, dear Joe, but I was too happy." They were both so overjoyed to see me, so proud to see me, so touched by my coming to them, so delighted that I should have come by accident to make their day complete!

My first thought was one of great thankfulness that I had never breathed this last baffled hope to Joe. How often, while he was with me in my illness, had it risen to my lips. How irrevocable would have been his knowledge of it, if he had remained with me another hour!

"Dear Biddy," said I, "you have the best husband in the whole world, and if you could have seen him by my bed you would have—But no, you couldn't love him better than you do."

"No, I couldn't, indeed," said Biddy.

"And, dear Joe, you have the best wife in the whole world, and she will make you as happy as even you deserve to be, you dear, good, noble Joe!"

Joe looked at me with a quivering lip, and fairly put his sleeve before his eyes.

"And Joe and Biddy both, as you have been to church to-day, and are in charity and love with all mankind, receive my humble thanks for all you have done for me, and all I have so ill repaid! And when I say that I am going away within the hour, for I am soon going abroad, and that I shall never rest until I have worked for the money with which you have kept me out of prison, and have sent it to you, don't think, dear Joe and Biddy, that if I could repay it a thousand times over, I suppose I could cancel a farthing of the debt I owe you, or that I would do so if I could!"

They were both melted by these words, and both entreated me to say no more.

"But I must say more. Dear Joe, I hope you will have children to love, and that some little fellow will sit in this chimney corner of a winter night, who may remind you of another little fellow gone out of it for ever. Don't tell him, Joe, that I was thankless; don't tell him, Biddy, that I was ungenerous and unjust; only tell him that I honoured you both, because you were both so good and true, and that, as your child, I said it would be natural to him to grow up a much better man than I did."

"I ain't a going," said Joe, from behind his sleeve, "to tell him nothink o' that natur, Pip. Nor Biddy ain't. Nor yet no one ain't."

"And now, though I know you have already done it in your own kind hearts, pray tell me, both, that you forgive me! Pray let me hear you say the words, that I may carry the sound of them away with me, and then I shall be able to believe that you can trust me, and think better of me, in the time to come!"

"O dear old Pip, old chap," said Joe. "God knows as I forgive you, if I have anythink to forgive!"

"Amen! And God knows I do!" echoed Biddy.

"Now let me go up and look at my old little room, and rest there a few minutes by myself, and then when I have eaten and drunk with you, go with me as far as the finger-post, dear Joe and Biddy, before we say good-by!"

I sold all I had, and I put aside as much as I could, for a composition with my creditors—who gave me ample time to pay them in full—and I went out and joined Herbert. Within a month, I had quitted England, and within two months I was clerk to Clarricker and Co., and within four months I assumed my first undivided responsibility. For, the beam across the parlour ceiling at Mill Pond Bank, had then ceased to tremble under old Bill Barley's growls and was at peace, and Herbert had gone away to marry Clara, and I was left in sole charge of the Eastern Branch until he brought her back.

Many a year went round, before I was a partner in the House; but, I lived happily with Herbert and his wife, and lived frugally, and paid my debts, and maintained a constant correspondence with Biddy and Joe. It was not until I became third in the Firm, that Clarricker

betrayed me to Herbert; but, he then declared that the secret of Herbert's partnership had been long enough upon his conscience, and he must tell it. So, he told it, and Herbert was as much moved as amazed, and the dear fellow and I were not the worse friends for the long concealment. I must not leave it to be supposed that we were ever a great House, or that we made mints of money. We were not in a grand way of business, but we had a good name, and worked for our profits, and did very well. We owed so much to Herbert's ever cheerful industry and readiness, that I often wondered how I had conceived that old idea of his inaptitude, until I was one day enlightened by the reflection, that perhaps the inaptitude had never been in him at all, but had been in me.

## CHAPTER LIX.

FOR eleven years, I had not seen Joe nor Biddy with my bodily eyes—though they had both been often before my fancy in the East—when, upon an evening in December, an hour or two after dark, I laid my hand softly on the latch of the old kitchen door. I touched it so softly that I was not heard, and looked in unseen. There, smoking his pipe in the old place by the kitchen firelight, as Hale and as strong as ever though a little grey, sat Joe; and there, fenced into the corner with Joe's leg, and sitting on my own little stool looking at the fire, was—I again!

"We giv' him the name of Pip for your sake, dear old chap," said Joe, delighted when I took another stool by the child's side (but I did not rumple his hair), "and we hoped he might grow a little bit like you, and we think he do."

I thought so too, and I took him out for a walk next morning, and we talked immensely, understanding one another to perfection. And I took him down to the churchyard, and set him on a certain tombstone there, and he showed me from that elevation which stone was sacred to the memory of Philip Pirrip, late of this Parish, and Also Georgiana, Wife of the Above.

"Biddy," said I, when I talked with her after dinner, as her little girl lay sleeping in her lap, "you must give Pip to me, one of these days; or lend him, at all events."

"No, no," said Biddy, gently. "You must marry."

"So Herbert and Clara say, but I don't think I shall, Biddy. I have so settled down in their home, that it's not at all likely. I am already quite an old bachelor."

Biddy looked down at her child, and put its little hand to her lips, and then put the good matronly hand with which she had touched it, into mine. There was something in the action and in the light pressure of Biddy's wedding-ring, that had a very pretty eloquence in it.

"Dear Pip," said Biddy, "you are sure you don't fret for her?"

"No—I think not, Biddy."

"Tell me as an old, old friend. Have you quite forgotten her?"

"My dear Biddy, I have forgotten nothing in my life that ever had a foremost place there,

and little that ever had any place there. But that poor dream, as I once used to call it, has all gone by, Biddy, all gone by!"

Nevertheless, I knew while I said those words that I secretly intended to revisit the site of the old house that evening alone, for her sake. Yes, even so. For Estella's sake.

I had heard of her, as leading a most unhappy life, and as being separated from her husband, who had used her with great cruelty, and who had become quite renowned as a compound of pride, avarice, brutality, and meanness. And I had heard of the death of her husband, from an accident consequent on his ill-treatment of a horse. This release had befallen her some two years before; for anything I knew, she was married again.

The early dinner hour at Joe's, left me abundance of time, without hurrying my talk with Biddy, to walk over to the old spot before dark. But, what with loitering on the way, to look at old objects and to think of old times, the day had quite declined when I came to the place.

There was no house now, no brewery, no building whatever left, but the wall of the old garden. The cleared space had been enclosed with a rough fence, and, looking over it, I saw that some of the old ivy had struck root anew, and was growing green on low quiet mounds of ruin. A gate in the fence standing ajar, I pushed it open, and went in.

A cold silvery mist had veiled the afternoon, and the moon was not yet up to scatter it. But, the stars were shining beyond the mist, and the moon was coming, and the evening was not dark. I could trace out where every part of the old house had been, and where the brewery had been, and where the gates, and where the casks. I had done so, and was looking along the desolate garden-walk, when I beheld a solitary figure in it.

The figure showed itself aware of me, as I advanced. It had been moving towards me, but it stood still. As I drew nearer, I saw it to be the figure of a woman. As I drew nearer yet, it was about to turn away, when it stopped, and let me come up with it. Then, it faltered as if much surprised, and uttered my name, and I cried out:

"Estella!"

"I am greatly changed. I wonder you know me."

The freshness of her beauty was indeed gone, but its indescribable majesty and its indescribable charm remained. Those attractions in it, I had seen before; what I had never seen before, was the saddened softened light of the once proud eyes; what I had never felt before, was the friendly touch of the once insensible hand.

We sat down on a bench that was near, and I said, "After so many years, it is strange that we should thus meet again, Estella, here where our first meeting was! Do you often come back?"

"I have never been here since."

"Nor I."

The moon began to rise, and I thought of the

placid look at the white ceiling, which had passed away. The moon began to rise, and I thought of the pressure on my hand when I had spoken the last words he had heard on earth.

Estella was the next to break the silence that ensued between us.

"I have very often hoped and intended to come back, but have been prevented by many circumstances. Poor, poor old place!"

The silvery mist was touched with the first rays of the moonlight, and the same rays touched the tears that dropped from her eyes. Not knowing that I saw them, and setting herself to get the better of them, she said quietly :

"Were you wondering, as you walked along, how it came to be left in this condition?"

"Yes, Estella."

"The ground belongs to me. It is the only possession I have not relinquished. Everything else has gone from me, little by little, but I have kept this. It was the subject of the only determined resistance I made in all the wretched years."

"Is it to be built on?"

"At last it is. I came here to take leave of it before its change. And you," she said, in a voice of touching interest to a wanderer, "you live abroad still?"

"Still."

"And do well, I am sure?"

"I work pretty hard for a sufficient living, and therefore—Yes, I do well."

"I have often thought of you," said Estella.

"Have you?"

"Of late, very often. There was a long hard

time when I kept far from me, the remembrance of what I had thrown away when I was quite ignorant of its worth. But, since my duty has not been incompatible with the admission of that remembrance, I have given it a place in my heart."

"You have always held your place in my heart," I answered. And we were silent again, until she spoke.

"I little thought," said Estella, "that I should take leave of you in taking leave of this spot. I am very glad to do so."

"Glad to part again, Estella? To me, parting is a painful thing. To me, the remembrance of our last parting has been ever mournful and painful."

"But you said to me," returned Estella, very earnestly, "'God bless you, God forgive you!' And if you could say that to me then, you will not hesitate to say that to me now—now, when suffering has been stronger than all other teaching, and has taught me to understand what your heart used to be. I have been bent and broken, but—I hope—into a better shape. Be as considerate and good to me as you were, and tell me we are friends."

"We are friends," said I, rising and bending over her, as she rose from the bench.

"And will continue friends apart," said Estella.

I took her hand in mine, and we went out of the ruined place; and, as the morning mists had risen long ago when I first left the forge, so the evening mists were rising now, and in all the broad expanse of tranquil light they showed to me, I saw the shadow of no parting from her.

#### THE END OF GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

OUR readers already know that the next number of this Journal will contain the first portion of a new romance by SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, which will be continued from week to week for six months. On its completion, it will be succeeded by a new serial story by MR. WILKIE COLLINS, to be continued from week to week for nine months.

The repeal of the Duty on Paper will enable us greatly to improve the quality of the material on which ALL THE YEAR ROUND is printed, and therefore to enhance the mechanical clearness and legibility of these pages. Of the Literature to which we have a new encouragement to devote them, it becomes us to say no more than that we believe it would have been simply impossible, when paper was taxed, to make the present announcement.

#### ADVENTURES OF MONSIEUR MIRES.

It was in the ancient city of Bordeaux, and in the month of December, 1809, that Jules Isaac Mirès, the offspring of Jewish parents, first saw the light. His father, a money-changer and watchmaker, kept one of those little shops which line the Exchange of Bordeaux; but the proverbial success of his nation does not seem to have accompanied his operations, as he left nothing to his son when he died, but the charge of supporting three penniless sisters. When six years old young Mirès was sent as a day-scholar to pick up what education he might at the feet of a learned professor named Jolly. This Gamaliel, however, did not give himself much trouble

with his pupil, or his pupil took little pains to learn; for Monsieur Mirès tells us that when he left school, at the ripe age of twelve, he had acquired but a very imperfect knowledge of the French language. It is most likely that the elder Mirès had never heard of Dogberry's theory, that "reading and writing come by nature"; but he acted as if he had no great faith in tuition, removing Jules at the age aforesaid from Professor Jolly's care, and placing him in the shop of Monsieur Beret, a dealer in glass. It is not on record that, like Alnashar, Jules Mirès kicked down his fortunes in a fit of presumptuous castle-building, but he admits that visions of future greatness made the details of the glass-trade distasteful to him, and dreaming

of a more important and profitable employment, "like a bird," he sentimentally says, "I quitted my happy nest to seek adventures"—and to feather another nest of his own making.

At eighteen years of age, then, the world was to Jules Mirès the "oyster," which he sought, in the best way he could, to open. On leaving Monsieur Beret he entered the office of Monsieur Ledentu, a commission-agent; but, at the end of three years, the business assumed proportions which the young clerk's limited education disqualified him from conducting, and he was, consequently, dismissed. His next employment was a clerkship in a government office, specially formed for ascertaining house and property value in and around Bordeaux, and the experience he acquired in this position enabled him to support himself and his three sisters, after the office was suppressed, for several years. But it was a bare struggle for existence, and at last, in the year 1841, when he had completed his thirty-first year, Jules Mirès took that step which is taken by nine Frenchmen out of ten when they are out of luck—he went to Paris.

A native of Bordeaux, his first thought was to do something in wines; but as he had neither capital, credit, nor friends, he gave up that idea in less than a month. He then tried to turn to account the knowledge he had gained of house-surveying, but the civic authorities of Paris were so little desirous of having their property looked up by an itinerant Jew, and were, moreover, so generally hostile to his project, that he was obliged, after trying it on for nearly two years, to give that up also. A third attempt, to get up a special agency for collecting direct taxes, was no more successful than either of the preceding ventures, and at the end of 1844 Jules Mirès was, as it were, high and dry in the streets of Paris.

Our speculator had hitherto kept as closely within the limits of honesty as circumstances and his natural tendencies would admit of; but, when, after roughing it for five-and-thirty years, he found himself without the cash of which he stood in need, he determined to trade upon the money of others. The very best opening for one who wishes to cultivate this line of business is the Bourse of Paris, and on the Bourse of Paris Jules Mirès accordingly went, commencing his speculative career as a dabbler in promissory shares. "This commerce," says Monsieur Mirès, in his recently published Account of his Life and his Affairs, "was at that time in a very flourishing condition, and from the very first of my adopting it I obtained a relative success, which gave me a taste for financial operations which I had never before experienced for any other kind of business."

The year 1845 was, as many have good reason to remember, a year of crisis. The railway fever was at its height, collapse followed, and the law against over-speculation was accompanied by the express interdiction of promissory share negotiation. Those who had profited by this mode of conducting affairs—and Monsieur Mirès seems to have been one of them—were exposed

—most unjustly, of course—to all sorts of virulent accusations; and some of these share dealers, Monsieur Mirès tells us, went the length of actually "blushing like guilty persons, if it became known that they had gained money by shares, or the promise of shares!" But, as hard words break no bones, so, blushing at irregular profits does not empty the full pocket; and a change having taken place in the manner of share dealing, which passed into the hands of the regular "agents de change," Monsieur Mirès associated himself as an intermediate with one of these brokers, and occupied this position when the revolution of February broke out, completely upsetting every species of "financial operation"—a phrase of most convenient application, and one which Monsieur Mirès greatly delights in.

The ground again cut from under his feet—for intermediates seem no longer wanted when the principals had left off doing business—Monsieur Mirès listened to a proposition made to him by a certain Monsieur Millard, to purchase in conjunction a newspaper called the *Journal des Chemins de Fer*, and then, he says, he began "that series of enterprises which has cost me so much unfriendly criticism, partial minds never considering that the very publicity to which I had recourse was the real proof of my sincerity." It is in this spirit of perfect openness that Monsieur Mirès goes on to relate the history of all the speculations in which he has been engaged, firmly convinced—or, at all events, appearing to entertain the conviction—that nothing could be more legitimate or financially correct than the operations which have ruined so many and brought him within the grasp of the law.

To "brazen it out" seems, in fact, to be an essential feature of the system which Monsieur Mirès acted upon, for the benefit of the public—and of himself; and, drawing a marked line between "*Ma Vie*" and "*Mes Affaires*"—as if the mere physical had nothing in common with the financial existence—he enters into the amplest details, with a sincerity that would be truly astonishing, if he only revealed the truth. "At the moment," he says, "of speaking of the affairs and enterprises which I have conducted from 1848 to 1860, I am naturally led—in order that the history of my financial career may be complete—to describe what my participation has been in the principal financial events which have occurred during this period. I may say with pride that I have greatly contributed to, if I have not actually initiated, them; and that I have been at least the instigator of the practical thought which has brought them about." Let individuals suffer as they may, to the country at large Monsieur Mirès declares he is its greatest benefactor. "Happily for France," he continues, "the three great financial facts cannot be destroyed which have marked the last few years, and which both now and for the future will contribute to her greatness. These three facts are: the creation of the *Credit Mobilier*; the adoption of the system of public subscrip-

tion for loans; and the reconstitution of the capital of the Bank of France." Monsieur Mirès gives himself the credit—such as it is—of having suggested the first of these schemes, by the practical but incomplete attempt which he made between 1850 and 1853, under the title of *Caisse des Actions Réunies*; his share in the second was not, he asserts, less direct; and he claims the merit of having set the third on foot by propositions made by him to the Bank of France, which, though not directly accepted, were afterwards partially adopted. These circumstances are recalled by Monsieur Mirès "because they add to the services which he has rendered to industry, since the month of September, 1848," when he undertook the direction of the *Journal des Chemins de Fer*, which had ceased to appear a few weeks after the revolution of February.

For this newspaper, on the editing of which he greatly prides himself—as well he may—Monsieur Mirès gave a trifle more than a thousand francs (say, forty-five pounds sterling). His first care, he tells us, was to reassure the public mind, to restore depressed confidence in the value of railway shares, and to prevent their being sold at a ruinous price. His process in editing resembled the literary arrangement between the King of Prussia and Voltaire. "At first," says Monsieur Mirès, "I experienced some difficulty in rendering my thoughts so as to convey the impression I desired. I wrote the articles such as I conceived them, and then handed them to an editor, who corrected the style. But, thanks to daily perseverance for several years, I succeeded at last in expressing my ideas with a facility I never expected when I first became the proprietor of the journal."

This was not his sole success. Monsieur Mirès succeeded in persuading the public that the best thing they could do was to take shares in certain companies of his formation. The first of these was called "*La Caisse des Actions Réunies*," and the object of it was the creation of a financial society, the capital of which was to be employed in buying shares at a favourable moment, in order to sell them again at a profit to be divided amongst the subscribers. Incessant advertising, with the promise of a profit ranging from thirty to forty per cent, rendered this project successful—to Monsieur Mirès certainly, if not to the shareholders—for, at the expiration of three years when the affairs of the society were wound up, he was in a condition to enter upon speculations of the greatest magnitude. By that time he had bought two more newspapers, *Le Pays* and *Le Constitutionnel*; and, having thus got two of the most influential organs of the press in his power—with Monsieur le Vicomte de la Guerronnière as editor-in-chief of the first-named journal—he took his full swing. For these two newspapers Monsieur Mirès paid, he says, 2,700,000 fr., and having added 300,000 fr. more, he created a company, with a capital of 3,000,000 fr., which, for nine years, produced an average of more

than ten per cent. Something must have paid Monsieur Mirès well to put him in a condition, in the course of three years, of buying a property worth 120,000*l.* sterling.

From this time forward we hear nothing more of operations on an ordinary scale; all figures not expressed in millions are passed over as "vulgar fractions." Thus, in 1852, the city of Paris wanted a loan of 50,000,000 fr.; all the great financial influences contended for it, and the adjudication was made to a firm with which Monsieur Mirès had combined. Again, in 1853, Monsieur Mirès entered into arrangements with the "*Crédit foncier*" of the two cities of Marseilles and Nevers to supply each of them with 24,000,000 fr.; but here the contracts were annulled through the interposition of certain powerful financiers in Paris, and the result was a loss to Monsieur Mirès of 500,000 fr. He complains of this loss; but what was it to the man whose speculations "for the account," in the course of the four last years of his career, amounted to the incredible sum of 60,880,000*l.* sterling? The grand affair of 1853 was the formation of the "*Caisse Générale des Chemins de Fer*" (General Railway Banking Company), the founders of which were the Baron de Pontalba and Messieurs Blaise and Solar, the bankers. A project of this nature could not, as a matter of course, get on without the co-operation of Monsieur Mirès; and, in an evil hour (according to his own account), he consented to take the place of Monsieur Blaise; the financial management (or "*raison sociale*") being constituted by J. Mirès and Co., the "Co.<sup>B</sup>" being Monsieur Solar, who had the wit not to wait for his trial when he and Monsieur Mirès were first inculpated.

The capital of this new company was originally only twelve millions of francs, but it was speedily increased to fifty millions; and, with this amount for the base of his operations, Monsieur Mirès "went at it." There was, first of all, the purchase of the collieries of Portes and Senechas, with the construction of the necessary railway, for supplying Marseilles with coal at a greatly diminished rate. Then came the iron foundries of St. Louis, in the suburbs of Marseilles, worked with ores of Elba and the coke of Portes; an enterprise subsidiary to the collieries. After this, ensued the contract for lighting Marseilles with gas—the four undertakings being fused into one company. There would have been two more schemes, the purchase of ground in Marseilles for new docks, and a network of railways, called "*le Réseau Pyrénéen*," if, from some unexplained cause of hostility, the successive Ministers of Public Works (MM. Magne and Rouher) had not refused their consent to the sale of the one, or the cession of the other, to Monsieur Mirès. That this refusal should have been persisted in, surprises Monsieur Mirès excessively. "I never could discover how this hostility originated: the proprietor of journals devoted to the defence of the policy of the government, I had

left the absolute direction of them entirely to the board of management, and only possessed the right of paying the political and literary editors, which cost me 300,000 francs a year. I interrogated my past life; I asked myself if there existed by chance any obscure passage in it which could justify the ostracism by which I was struck; but I found in it no single act contrary to honour or to simple delicacy. I knew, however, that the financial world was hostile towards me, and that cruel rivalries existed in that region; but I could not persuade myself that outside that circle I was exposed to significant enmity. Yet, how otherwise? (poor innocent!) "explain the constant animadversions of which I was the object, and the full expression of which I found in the affected disdain of my proposition with respect to the Réseau Pyrénéen?"

Let us turn, then, to these "foreign affairs," which affect—not the honour of Monsieur Mirès—that is impossible—but his patriotism and his private feelings. First, figure in the list the Roman railways; then, follows the Spanish loan of sixteen millions sterling; then, the construction of the railway from Pampeluna to Saragossa; finally, the Turkish loan of also sixteen millions sterling. Monsieur Mirès contends that none of these were hazardous enterprises, and, had good faith presided over them, there might, perchance, have been no great difference of opinion between the public and himself; but when, as in the case of the Pampeluna Railway, six thousand three hundred and twelve shares, representing a value of one million three thousand one hundred and twenty pounds sterling, were issued in excess of the number originally subscribed for, it appears tolerably certain that the holders of the extra shares at least must have hazarded something considerable.

The Spanish loan, which was knocked on the head in consequence of the opposition it met with from the really great capitalists of Europe, furnishes Monsieur Mirès with the opportunity of writing up the Jews of the south of France at the expense of their co-religionists in the north; or, in other words, of falling foul of the house of Rothschild for transacting business in an honest, straightforward manner. The arguments he employs are curious; but, as we are dealing with the facts of Monsieur Mirès's case and not with his theories, we pass over a very amusing chapter, to come to the "financial reaction" which took place in the year 1857. Monsieur Mirès complains that the public mind was turned against him by the dramatists and political writers. First, appeared a piece written by Monsieur Ponsard, called *La Bourse*, which was highly approved of by the Emperor; then, came the *Question d'Argent*, by Alexandre Dumas the younger; and, a few months afterwards, *Les Manieurs d'Argent*, by Monsieur Oscar de Vallée, Advocate-General of the Imperial Court of Paris. At the same period Paris was inundated with biographies of the principal mushroom financiers, representing

them in a most unfavourable light; and soon followed a deluge of pamphlets and newspaper articles, the outpourings of "a venal press," which, says Monsieur Mirès, "if they excited some indignation by their injustice and defamatory character, flattered at bottom the bad passions of the ignorant multitude, ever prone to raise its voice against riches and success. These publications," continues Monsieur Mirès, "some of which were encouraged, and others tolerated, necessarily determined the vague instincts of opinion, gave them form and body, and converted, finally, a general hostility into a question of persons." The principal object of these unjust attacks was the Caisse Générale des Chemins de Fer, represented by Monsieur Mirès. But the heaviest blow dealt against him came from the government itself, in the shape of a warning, consequent upon the appearance of an article on the state of the money-market, which appeared in the Journal des Chemins de Fer. Monsieur Mirès had replied vigorously to the dramatists by whom he had been covertly assailed; but when the government turned against him it was too much: he resolved to retire altogether from business, and took that resolution on the very day the warning appeared. He accordingly convened a meeting of the shareholders in the Caisse Générale des Chemins de Fer, and tendered his resignation, accompanying the act by a report, "which was, naturally, an energetic refutation of the dominant ideas and restrictive measures which had consecrated those ideas;" phrases not particularly intelligible, but, as it appears, highly effective in rehabilitating Monsieur Mirès, for the meeting unanimously insisted upon his remaining at his post; a proceeding which he agreed to, "much against his will." If 1857 was unlucky for Monsieur Mirès, 1858 was still more so; in fact, he dates all his misfortunes from it. The works at Marseilles were stopped, and a decree of the Council of State not only prevented the development of the Roman railways, but seriously affected the credit of the Caisse Générale des Chemins de Fer, which could no longer, by issuing shares, procure the sums it stood in need of to meet its engagements. In spite, however, of this disastrous result, the works on the Pampeluna Railway (in 1859) were briskly prosecuted, and (in 1860) the Turkish loan was negotiated.

Without doubt, if we agree with Monsieur Mirès, these two last affairs would have set him on his legs more securely than ever; but, before this consummation of his hopes arrived, an untoward circumstance occurred. On the 15th of December, 1860—the identical day on which Monsieur Mirès sent out a notice to the shareholders in the Caisse Générale des Chemins de Fer, informing them of the advantageous terms on which the Turkish loan had been negotiated for—came thundering down upon his devoted head, a judicial instruction provoked by the Baron de Pontalba, who, in the simplest and most positive terms, denounced his friend and colleague, Monsieur Mirès, as an unmitigated swindler. What in France is called a

"descente judiciaire" immediately took place : the offices of the Caisse Générale des Chemins de Fer were taken possession of by justice, and seals were set on all the books of Monsieur Mirès, whose credit disappeared from that day, and with it fell, "in the height of its prosperity, (1) the financial establishment which I had contributed to maintain in a favourable situation, notwithstanding the obstacles of every kind that were accumulated in my path."

The denunciation of the Baron de Pontalba was to the effect that Monsieur Mirès had, on his own personal account, made an operation for a fall in the funds, resulting in a loss of 206,000 francs, which loss Monsieur Mirès saddled upon the company ; that he had liquidated the accounts of numerous clients without any previous intimation, the fact being only made known to them by the intimation of the liquidation itself ; that in the course of the years 1857 and 1858, MM. Mirès and Solar had sold on their own account shares in the Caisse Générale des Chemins de Fer which either did not exist or which belonged to certain clients ; that the sale of these shares had given rise to a double payment of coupons, which, instead of being paid by MM. Mirès and Solar, had been turned to their own profit ; and that they had issued twelve millions' worth of bonds of the Port de Marseilles, when only ten millions ought to have been negotiated.

All these charges Monsieur Mirès severally denied, after stating that the Baron de Pontalba's denunciation was caused by the refusal of his exorbitant claims for certain services rendered—claims which were, however, eventually admitted. On their payment—to the tune of fourteen hundred thousand francs—the seals were taken off Monsieur Mirès's books, and the whole thing seemed to have blown over. But Monsieur Mirès made a mistake in supposing so ; for, though he was led by the Prefect of Police to believe, on the 6th of January of the present year, that he might freely resume the management of his affairs, proceedings against him were resumed on the 13th of February ; on the 15th and 16th of the same month his books were seized anew ; and on the 17th he was himself arrested and taken to the criminal prison of Mazas.

How far it comports with English notions of justice, to keep a man a close prisoner for months without allowing him to communicate with friend or advocate, or making him aware of the specific charges to be brought against him, we shall not stop to inquire : let it suffice that, after two postponements, to give Monsieur Mirès time to prepare his defence, he was finally put on his trial before the Tribunal Correctional of Paris, on the 27th of June, 1861. Monsieur Solar, who was included in the same indictment, did not answer to his name ; he was consequently condemned in default ; and the trial of Monsieur Mirès was separately

proceeded with, so far as related to the charge of "escroquerie," the other directors of the General Railway Banking Company being held civilly responsible for the acts of their manager.

MM. Mirès and Solar, then, were formally accused in court of making use of fraudulent manœuvres to create a belief in a chimerical event, by which they obtained various sums of money from divers persons (named in the indictment), and receipts and discharges from others, thereby swindling them out of the whole or part of their fortunes ; of having sold securities entrusted to them as soon as deposited without the consent of, and without notice to, depositors, this sale, affected at high prices, producing upwards of 10,000,000 fr., which sum was concealed from their clients, who were, moreover, carefully kept in error by the receipt of periodical accounts, sent to them by MM. Mirès and Solar, in which they were debited with interest on the sums advanced to them, and credited with the produce of supposed coupons belonging to securities which no longer existed in the caisse ; of fraudulently liquidating their situation with regard to their clients, and fictitiously selling, at low quotations, the securities which they no longer had in their possession, since they had in reality sold them at an antecedent period when prices were high ; of turning to their own account the difference between the prices of real and fictitious sales, &c. &c.—all of which constituted the acts of escroquerie for which they were indicted.

How some of these swindling manœuvres were carried out, was shown by the evidence of the victims.

Vicomte d'Aure, formerly an officer in a cavalry regiment, deposited that in 1858, being in want of money, he had obtained an advance from the Caisse Générale of 10,000 fr. on a deposit of 35 Austrian railway shares. Some time after, he received a letter saying that they had been sold for 12,000 fr. As they were worth more, he complained, and was told that if he would pay back the 10,000 fr. he should have his shares, or that, if he preferred, he might receive 2000 fr. to make up the 12,000 fr. "I am not a man of business," added the witness, "and as I had not 10,000 fr. to give, and as I saw that I was fleeced, I took the 2000 fr." The president stated that the shares of the witness had been sold for 14,000 fr.

A man named Bernard, a shop-porter, said that he had deposited eight shares of the Victor Emmanuel Railway in the Caisse Générale as security for a loan. "After a while," continued the witness, "I received a letter announcing that my shares had been sold. I hurried to the caisse and asked, 'By what right have you disposed of my shares ?' 'Ah!' was the answer, 'a general war is coming, and we fear a fall !' I subsequently learned that a long time before, my shares had been sold for more than 600 fr., and yet I was only paid 300 fr. ! I saw Mirès, and asked him how he could take on himself to sell my property ? He replied, 'If we had not sold, you would have lost all !' The place was full of people who had been treated as I was. They made a great tumult ; some of them said they had

been robbed, and a female, weeping bitterly, exclaimed that she was ruined!" The President: "You accepted what was offered to you?" "Yes, for what could I do? I had no means of going to law. I was the earthen crock against the iron pot." Mirès observed that when the last witness had deposited his shares they were only worth 460 fr. each.

M. Beauvais stated that he had long known Mirès, and had deposited funds and securities in his caisse. In 1856, seeing that Western Railway shares had risen to 980fr., he wrote to Mirès to order him to sell fifty-one which he possessed. The order was not obeyed. He then directed that the sale should be made at 975fr., but none was effected. At last he ordered that it should take place on the best terms that could be obtained. He waited, and heard nothing more of the matter. In 1859 he was astonished to be informed that he had been "executed" (sold up). He then learned on inquiry that his Western shares had been sold in 1856, also some Saragossa shares, and other securities at a later period, and he knew nothing of all that! Mirès said that if the order had really been given in 1856, and not executed, he would indemnify the witness for the loss he had sustained. He had received about six hundred letters a day, and had not had the time to read them.

M. Courtois, of Amiens, stated that in 1856 he had deposited thirty-two shares in the caisse, and that an advance had been made to him on them to pay some calls which had become due. In 1859 he received a letter saying he had been executed, but recommending him to authorise Mirès to buy back his shares at a lower rate than his had been sold for. His first impression was that the letter was a mystification, but he came to Paris and went to the caisse. "I found there," continued the witness, "a number of persons who were heaping imprecations on Mirès. I made a great noise. I said to every clerk I saw, 'By what right have you sold my shares?' But I could obtain no satisfactory answer. I insisted on seeing Mirès himself, and after a while some one said to me, 'There is M. Mirès.' I went up to the person indicated, and repeated my question, by what right my shares had been sold. 'Why,' said he, smiling with great affability, 'For your own interest.' On that I got into a passion, and even went, I believe, the length of calling him a swindler! 'And,' I added, 'you are making more dupes now, for there is at this moment a crowd at your doors on the pretext of subscribing for bonds in your Roman railways, but the crowd is a packed one.' (A laugh.) At last a great big fellow in green livery made me a sign to go away, and as I did not obey I was turned out." Mirès.—This deposition is a painful example of all I have had to suffer. The loss which the witness has sustained cannot be ascribed to me. It is owing to his having bought at an excessively high price, and to the war having caused a heavy fall. He owed us money, and we wanted him to give additional security.

Further explanation followed on the part of Monsieur Mirès, and in the course of his observations the president dropped the word "spoliation." Monsieur Mirès fired at once. "No!" he exclaimed, "there was no spoliation. I will not permit that word to be employed. Accuse me of what you will, but I will not allow my honour to be attacked—I will not permit you to say that I am a dishonest man." This was very like what the Irish soldier said

when a lady, with whom he was upon visiting terms, accused him of stealing her poker. He swore that he was innocent, by every conceivable oath; but at last the lady told him he had not given his honour. "Touch my honour, touch my life!" cried Paddy; but there he distanced Monsieur Mirès, for he added, "here, woman, take your poker!" Monsieur Mirès, on the other hand, did not make restitution, but, as the following instance shows, clamoured for "more."

Monsieur Dethierry, a cabinet courier, deposed that in 1857 he had a loan from Mirès on security of sixty-eight Western and thirty-four Caisse Générale shares. In 1859 he was told that the former had been sold for 436 fr., and the latter for 167fr. each, whereas he ascertained that in reality the sums realised were 750 fr. and 375 fr. The proposition was afterwards made, that what had been received should be put in the scale against what he owed. "But," said the witness, "I answered that I preferred having recourse to the scales of justice. My poor wife," continued Monsieur Dethierry, "went in tears to Monsieur Mirès; and do you know what he said to her? 'Let your husband bleed; let him come down with new securities.'"

Here is another case. Colonel Donnaire stated that one hundred and fourteen Mobilier shares, which he had deposited with Mirès as security for an advance, had been sold. When he heard of the sale he was greatly astonished, and asked Mirès by what right he had made it. Mirès answered in a sort of whisper, "On account of the war which is coming, but you can buy back the shares at a lower rate!" In presence of so much assurance witness was silent. He afterwards learned that the sale had been made for 220,000 fr., and yet Mirès represented that it only realised 101,000 fr.

To conclude. A host of witnesses (there were three hundred and sixty-three altogether) severally deposed that they had been defrauded out of different sums by Mirès having sold their securities without their consent; some of them, being in humble life, added that they were ruined.

Monsieur Mirès and his advocates made a desperate stand against all this testimony, but it was too much for them. All their quibbles and their quiddities, their special pleading and their technicalities, were of no avail in the presence of simple downright facts, and the blow, when it fell, was a heavy one. Three principal charges were proved against Monsieur Mirès; the swindling of three hundred and sixty-three shareholders; the fraudulent disposal of twenty-one thousand railway shares and other securities; and the illegal distribution of dividends which had not arisen from actual profits,—the object of this last operation being to enhance the value of worthless shares, and then sell them at a premium. For these offences the highest penalty which the law prescribes was pronounced by the court, namely, five years' imprisonment, and a fine of three thousand francs. The pecu-

niary penalty was nothing, but the sentence of imprisonment fell on Mirès like a thunderbolt. A letter from Paris states that, "while it was being read, the agony of Mirès was so great, that even those whose feelings are hardened by the daily task of passing severe judgments might have thought society sufficiently avenged by the sufferings he endured in that half-hour. Sometimes, as if to escape from them, he clutched at the bar with both his shrivelled hands, and sometimes let his head fall upon his left arm, that lay stretched along the balustrade, as if no longer able to support its weight. When all was over he threw his hands above his head, and clasping them tightly together, gave utterance to incoherent expressions of despair, and to escape from the gaze of so many lookers-on, rushed towards the little door of the prisoners' waiting-room, without seeming to see that it was shut, while guards closed round to secure him. His paleness afterwards became so great that he appeared as if about to faint, but presently he recovered his self-possession, took up his hat, and pressing it violently on his head, he left the court guarded by some policemen."

Thus vanishes the fortune of Monsieur Mirès. Like the gourd that sheltered Jonah, "It grew in a night, and in a night it withered."

## DRIFT.

## ANCIENT QUACKS.

ATTACHED to the retinue of King Henry the Fifth in his first voyage to France to "sustain that claim to the crown of France which his great-grandfather Edward the Third urged with such confidence and success," appear the names of Thomas Morestede and William Bradwardyn, surgeons, "each with 9 more surgeons." By Morestede's agreement with the King, he received the style of "King's surgeon," and in two petitions quoted in Rymer's *Pedera*, vol. ix. p. 252, he prays to be allowed "money to provide necessaries for his office, and a proper number of persons and carriages." The King granted him twelve persons, and "1 chariot and deuz somers." These twenty surgeons were attached to a force of full 30,000 men, so that it may be assumed that the number of properly qualified chirurgeons was very limited in the English dominions. The fact is, the art of surgery during the fifteenth century was merely manual dexterity helped by a few mechanical aids; the practice of medicine still rested in the hands of the clergy, and the only medical work which at this time appeared in our country was Kymer's *Dietary for the Preservation of Health*, in which the familiar recommendations touching exercise, the bath, and diet, handed down from Aristotle, are the principles set forth to teach the readers of a very prosy composition. Accordingly the following contemporaneous petition, dated in the ninth year of Henry the Fifth, is somewhat surprising; its prayer is so simple, and it defines so limited a grievance, that with improved phraseology, it might serve as a protest in our

own time, against unlicensed practitioners; some of whom figure in our law reports, occasionally, as practitioners of the basest arts of swindling.

"Hey and most myghty prince noble and worthy Lordes Spirituelx and Temporelx, and worshipfull Coēs (Commons), for so moche as a man hath thre things to governe, that is to say, Soule, Body and Worldly Goudes, the whiche ought and shulde ben principally reweld by thre Sciences, that ben Divinitie, Fisyk, and Lawe, the Soule by Divinitie, the Body by Fisyk, worldly Goudes by Lawe, and these conynges (cunnings) sholde be used and practised principally by the most conyng men in the same Sciences, and most approved in cases necessaries to encresce of vertu, long lyf, and goudes of fortune, to the worship of God, and comyn profit. But, worthy soveraines, as hit is known to youre hey discrecion, many unconnyng an (and) unapproved in the forsayd Science practiseth, and specialy in Fisyk, so that in this Roialme is every man, be he never so lewed, takyng upon hym practyse, y suffred to use hit, to grete harme and slaughtre of many men: Where if no man practised theryn but al only connyng men and approved sufficently y lerned in art, filosofye and fisyk, as hit is kept in other londes and roialms, ther shulde many man that dyeth, for defaute of helpe, lyve, and no man perish by unconnyng. Wherfore pleseth to youre excellent wysdomes, that ought after youre soule, have mo entendance to youre body, for the causes above sayd, to ordeine and make in Statut perpetuall to be straytly yused and kept, that no man of no maner estate, degré, or condicion, practyse in Fisyk, from this tyme forward, but he have long tyme yused the Seoles of Fisyk withynne som Universitee, and be graduated in the same; that is to say, but he be Bachelor or Doctour of Fisyk, havige lettres testimonialx sufficente of on of those degrees of the Universite, in the whiche he toke his degree yn; undur peyne of long emprisonement, and paynge XL li. to the Kyng; and that no woman use the practyse of Fisyk undre the same payne: and that the Sherrefe of the Sbire make inquisition in thaire tortes, if ther be eny that forfaiteth ayens this Statut, under a payne resonable, and theme that haz putt this Statut in execucion without any favour, under the same payne. Also, lest that thay the whiche ben able to practyse in Fisyk ben excluded fro practysing, the whiche be nought graduated, plesith to youre hey prudence, to send warrant to all the Sherrefs of Engelond, that every practysor in Fisyk nought grauaduated in the same science that wile practyse forth be withynne on of the Universitees of this lond by a certeine day, that they that ben able and approved, after trewe and streyte examinacion, be receyved to theyr degree, and that they be nought able, to cesse fro the practyse in to the tyme that they be able and approved, or never more entremette thereof; and that thereto also be iset a payne convenient."

In the same year the Lords of the Council

were empowered to punish such as practise without having proved themselves before the masters of that art.

## MISNAMED IN VAIN.

I THROUGH the city on a summer's day,  
Hot, sweltering, airless, sunless, bent my way :  
Black were the streets, black the dull houses all  
Beneath the soot's dim universal pall,  
And dun the stifling air, and dun the sky,  
Where here and there a patch I might descry.  
Filth, squalor, noxious vapours, round me teemed,  
The faces of the wretched children seemed—  
Hanging about the windows, where vile food  
By sight and smell awoke their languid blood—  
More gaunt and ghastly with the reeking heat  
That bathed their frail limbs with enfeebling sweat:  
Their shrewish mothers' voices seemed more loud,  
More dense, oppressive, the unresting crowd.

Languid and sick and faint, I struggled on.  
"Oh for a space to breathe and rest alone!"  
I cried, when, straight emerging from the maze,  
An open space allured my tired gaze:  
Quickly I reached it. There before me spread  
One of the pestilence-holes, whence London's dead,  
Not by night only, but by broadest day,  
Send murderous ghosts, whose mission is to slay  
Her living, and to poison air and earth  
And water, so that children from the birth  
Imbibe, bathe in, inhale, with every breath,  
The germinating seeds of sickness, death,  
Vice, poverty, corruption, till their brief  
And evil days at length obtain relief  
In "cold obstruction."

Leaning 'gainst the rail,  
Musing I gazed within the loathsome pale—  
A chaos of corruption. Festerings bones  
Lay here and there among the tumbling stones  
That seemed themselves too sick to stand erect,  
O'erpowered by the constant, sure effect  
Of that malignant influence. 'Mid the dank  
And venomous vapours grew a dark and rank  
And unclean vegetation, often stirred,  
Not by child-footsteps or the wing of bird,  
But by the furtive rat, whose presence there  
Suggested dreadful thoughts as to the fare  
He batten'd on.

And while I gazed there grew  
Upon my mind the memory, still new,  
Of a discourse, movingly eloquent,  
In which religion and sweet sentiment  
And dear traditions all were fondly blent, }  
To prove 'twas holy, wholesome, good and wise  
That still beneath God's heaven there should rise  
These hotbeds of the foulest and the worst  
Afflictions with which man by man is curs'd.  
"God's acre," he, the preacher, called it. "God's!"  
The devil owns each inch of all these sods,  
And hath no richer heritage. O Lord  
Of love, and life, and purity! that word  
Revolts my spirit!

Take Death at the best,  
What is it? When the soul has sought her rest,  
What then remains? A cold, stiff, senseless heap  
That hourly fades, soon losing e'en the shape  
And outline of the creature who, when spirit  
Inhabited this clay, did then inherit  
A spark of God's own nature. Now, behold  
This thing from which I shrink, whose clammy-cold  
Grey pallid brow I shudder e'en to touch  
And cannot kiss, although I would, so much  
Does my soul feel that nothing here is left

Of the loved lost of whom she is bereft,—  
If then in this I feel I have no part,  
I, fellow-mortal, whose weak human heart  
Must shortly still its pulses, and become  
Like to this corpse's, that the self-same doom  
Awaits us both,—can I suppose the Immortal  
Who greets our souls at Heaven's eternal portal  
Claims aught in that worn tenement which we  
Have spurning left behind, no more to be  
A hindrance and a burden?

But I'm told  
That from these human ruins good red gold  
May still be won, and that each charnel-field,  
Each devil's-acre gives a goodly yield,  
So 'tis "God's acre" called by men whose ease  
Is purchased chiefly by fat burial-fees.

## A NIGHT IN THE JUNGLE.

"THE hyenas and wolves were roaring all  
night outside my tent, but I kept up a good  
fire, and rose from time to time to look to it,  
and to the priming of my guns, and so got  
through the dark hours without accident."—  
Vide Travels of anybody, anywhere, at any page  
you like to turn to.

I venture to take the above quotation as a  
motto to my modest article, because it is appropriate to the matter of which I design to treat. I too have heard the hyenas and wolves howling outside my tent—if I may call it so—I have risen from time to time to relieve my restlessness, and though I have neither looked to my fire or my gun, I also have got through the dark hours without any accident whatever—even the slightest. The fact being, that these sounds have reached me without my stirring from home, or forsaking the protection of Marylebone for so much as a single day.

It is one of the romantic circumstances connected with a residence in Lumbago-terrace, Regent's Park, that the inhabitants of that moist and reeking region are able, in certain states of the wind, to hear in the dead of night the roar of the lion and the yell of the tiger, without apprehending any annoyance from the near neighbourhood of these terrible animals. To listen to such music, while lying comfortably between the sheets, is not bad sport. It is having, so to speak, the jungle brought home to one's door. You have the excitement of a night in the desert without any sense of insecurity, or any of the inconveniences inseparable from Eastern and Southern travel. And all this we, the inhabitants of Lumbago-terrace, owe to the happy chance which caused the Zoological authorities of this country to fix upon the Regent's Park as the spot best suited for the exhibition of their collection.

I have often heard, then, from my abode in Lumbago-terrace (to which residence I have adhered through twenty years of rheumatism), the roaring of the wild beasts in the Zoological Gardens; but I never heard it so loud, I never heard it break forth with such a sudden frenzy of violence, as it did at midnight on Wednesday, the twenty-sixth of June of the present year.

I have said that I have frequently heard these

sounds before. When a change of weather is toward—which is very often—when thunder is at hand, when the wind is in the east, and at other seasons of discomfort, the poor beasts behind the bars in the Zoological Gardens solace their misery by giving vent to the most dismal moans and roarings conceivable, and sometimes among the other sounds the thunder of the lion's roar may be heard pre-eminent and distinct.

On the night, however, to which I have alluded, the outcry of these unhappy animals was altogether of a different character. They had been quiet all day, and all through the early part of the night, when suddenly, and almost to a minute, at twelve P.M., the whole chorus of them burst out into one mighty shriek and yell of passion, which lasted in its fury so considerable a time that I came to the conclusion that some altogether unprecedented event must have taken place. In fact, I sat up in bed and said to myself, as I struck twelve cheerful little strokes out of my repeater :

" What can be going on to-night at the Zoological Gardens ? "

The reader shall hear what was going on.

At exactly fifteen minutes after nine P.M. on the evening mentioned above, a party of four gentlemen might have been observed ringing at a little postern gate, which, when closed, forms part of the fence of the outer circle of the Regent's Park. With the reader's permission we will adopt, in case it should be needful to speak of any one of these persons, a practice which has received the sanction of the Poet Shakespeare, though he generally reserved it for robbers, murderers, mobs, and other disorderly characters—in a word, we will call them 1st Gentleman, 2nd Gentleman, 3rd Gentleman, and 4th Gentleman.

These four gentlemen, then, having rung at the gate, and having been admitted by a keeper, were by him guided to the house of the superintendent of the collection; and it then became apparent that their visit was a pre-meditated visit, and that they had come there by appointment, for the express purpose of making a night inspection of the Gardens, and ascertaining for themselves how that collection, which we all know so well by daylight, looked in the dark, or illuminated only by the light of a lantern.

The party was formed with little delay. It was headed by the superintendent, who was closely followed by his four visitors; a guard of officials connected with the place bringing up the rear. At this time the feelings of our four friends, as they moved across the Gardens with a lantern in front and a lantern behind, were of a peculiar kind, oscillating between a conviction that they were going to sit up all night to see an execution at daybreak, and a firm belief that they were about to start immediately for foreign parts, on a voyage attended with many difficulties, and inconceivable peril.

It was quite possible to imagine that some

such journey was not only in contemplation, but that it had actually been entered on and prosecuted till the four travellers had reached some remote and savage district thousands of miles out of the way of civilisation. The small huts and low buildings which were scattered about being easily *imagined* into wigwams, and the occasional cry of some distant wild beast, or the shriek of some tropical bird striking on the ear, much as they might do in some Indian jungle, or Australian forest. The trees, too, in the darkness showed only the vaguest outline of their shape, and might have been shrubs of tropical growth, for aught that could be said to the contrary.

It was not long before the four gentlemen who had found themselves suddenly transported from Central London to Central Africa were able to detect, at some considerable distance, the form of an animal of huge size and ungainly shape, standing motionless on the margin of a small pool of water, which lay stretched out in front of it. The lines of this creature were only very vaguely discernible in the dim twilight of a June night, and it was too far off for the lanterns of the guides to be of any use. Supernaturally still, supernaturally huge and terrible in its forms, its faint grey masses only partially relieved from the faint grey masses of the ground and bank behind it, there was something so ghost-like about this motionless spectre, that 3rd Gentleman remarked to 4th Gentleman as the party moved on, that he saw now for the first time that the particular monster which had reappeared from time to time in all the fevered dreams of which he had been the victim since he was five years old, was, beyond all doubt, a hippopotamus seen by twilight.

Compared with this vision, the next animal with whom the travellers came in contact was almost homely in its unimpressiveness. An elephant lying down on its side close before you, and snoring so regularly and so loudly, that it was a wonder that his next-door neighbour, the rhinoceros, did not kick at the partition to wake him, is not, in truth, a spectacle to awe the beholder. Our adventurers passed on, after remarking to each other that they thought they detected a self-contained fury in the eye of the rhinoceros, which looked as if he could not stand the snoring of the elephant much longer, and would infallibly give warning next day.

Past the startled giraffes waving their heads in alarm at this night-visit, the little party moved on to where the vigorous and healthy ostriches live side by side with a certain little wan shy creature which is neither healthy nor vigorous. It was pitiful to see that poor, bare, wingless, featherless biped, the apteryx, turned out of that shelter and concealment which she adhered to strenuously. The very wall of her hiding-place had to be removed before there was any possibility of getting her to show herself, and her misery at being thus suddenly turned out in the night with the glare of a lamp upon her, and strangers peering at her through the wires of the cage, was touching in the extreme.

The poor wretch even dodged about to get behind the shadow of the keeper who went into the den, so as to get that functionary's body and limbs between itself and the light. Poor obsolete creature, rarely found upon the surface of the world, belonging to a species fast dying out, and which almost ought to be extinct; it shuns the light and loves the shade and retirement as some unlucky person who has survived his age and cannot adapt himself to the new state of things might keep himself out of the way of the new generation and its rapid progress. "Here, let me get away out of this glare," says the poor aptoryx, "I am not of this period; I know I ought to be extinct; I can't move with the age; I don't approve of the present goings on; they don't suit me. Not that I wish to interfere or prevent your moving on as you like, but please to let me keep out of it all—for it's not in my line, and, if you'll allow me, I'll get back again behind my screen, and end my days out of sight and out of mind."

The grove of parrots starts at first sight of the lantern into such a bristling phalanx of glaring, shrieking, bobbing, vengeful demons, that our adventurers do not spend many seconds in their society, but, owning themselves vanquished, fly off into the darkness again, leaving this whole army of malignants in full screech of triumph behind them, and betaking themselves to the region where the beaver, busy in the night, is like some country gentleman for ever occupied with the "improvements" in and about his small estate.

For, there never was such a fidget as your beaver. Talk about human manias for bricks and mortar; talk about throwing out bows, making new paths through the woods, flinging up slight conservatories, or knocking your passage into your dining-room; these human weaknesses are nothing to the alterations which the beaver is perpetually making in his estate, and apparently simply for the sake of making them. It is quite impossible not to envy the obvious sense of enjoyment with which this rascal crawls over the top of his house to where some bough which has made part of his thatch, does not meet his approval, and taking one end of it into his mouth, drags it after him till he gets to the edge of his pond, into which he allows himself to tumble, bough and all, with a lazy flop. Would that the poor aptoryx could have such sport as that beaver when he swims round the pond with the end of the bough still in his mouth, and presently dragging it out of the water again, tries how it will look on the other side of his roof. This beaver seems perpetually happy. He has constructed his own abode with materials thrown over into his enclosure, and goes on thus reconstructing and altering it for ever. The superintendent communicates it to 1st Gentleman, who retails it to 2nd, and so on, that this beaver is so fond of his house that though he managed on one occasion to get out of his enclosure and down to the banks of the neighbouring canal in the dead of the night, he was yet found next morning back in his legiti-

mate domain, and working away at his "improvements" as hard as ever. He is a lively chap at night, and was not the least disconcerted by the presence of the party gathered round him, but was, on the contrary, so tremendously busy in doing nothing and then undoing it again, still keeping his eye upon the four gentlemen who had come to see him, that 3rd Gentleman was heard at last to remark to 4th Gentleman that he "looked upon this animal as an impostor, and believed he was doing it all for effect."

In the due course of such rapid changes of country and climate as our adventurers are at this time subject to, it is not long before they come to a region where snakes and reptiles writhe and twist and stand erect, glaring malignantly at the intruders on their solitude, and at the unwonted blaze of lamp-light that comes with them. Festooned boas hang like tropical plants above them, reptiles with legs crawl out and watch them with erect heads, and small malignant dust-coloured vipers stand upon the tips of their tails and gasp envenomed breath against them.

Was it a dream—2nd Gentleman and 4th Gentleman were now getting very sleepy, and it might have been—was it a dream that one of the guides about this time remarked, pulling out a small heavy bag from a place of concealment, that he had got a few mice there, and that, perhaps, some of the reptiles might be on the feed? Was it a dream that he presently dived down into this bag, and, fishing up a little white mouse by the tail, introduced it into the den of a fearfully wide awake and restless dragon, with four legs, and a tail, and a pair of watchful eyes? It must have been a dream—it was too horrible to be anything else—that this little creature ran to the farthest corner of the den from that occupied by the dragon, and that anon, finding itself unmolested—for the dragon was too much occupied with our four gentlemen to take any notice of his small guest—came out and began to play about in the close vicinage of its tormentor, who evidently had his eye upon it, even while he appeared to be watching his human visitors. Yes; this was evidently a dream, and (dream-like) there was no termination to it; the mouse and the monster being left thus together, the mouse playing and the monster watching, without seeming to do so, out of the corner of his eye. Stop; perhaps the mouse got out afterwards through the bars; there seemed to be room. Thank goodness, there seemed to be room.

There is no worse place to dream in, than the Zoological Gardens. Gentleman No. 2 dreamed about this time, and so did No. 4, that a voice said once again, "Perhaps this one will take a mouse"—"this one" being the wretch who stood upon the end of his tail. The mouse was again handed in alive, and then both the above-mentioned gentlemen dreamed of a crunch, and then of a white mouse slowly disappearing down a throat not anything like so large as the object it swallowed, and they dreamed further that at

last only the hind-legs of the mouse and the end of its tail remained outside the snake's jaws, and that after this the form of the mouse was plainly discernible as it made its way along the interior of the snake's throat, till it was lost in the coils of the reptile's body, and might be considered to be finally disposed of; at which point in their dream Gentlemen Nos. 2 and 4 both felt as if they had taken a large and uncompromising pill.

After this, both these gentlemen saw in their dream, a monster nightmare frog, impossibly huge and bloated, and then they went on to a place where they had the most horrible vision of all; the dream-monster this time being called "The Javan Loris."

2nd Gentleman and 4th Gentleman imagined that they went into a place where there were more festoons of Python snake over their heads, heaving and swelling like animated sandbags, where there was a very sleepy sloth, who was so drowsy that he could never keep upon the top of the tree-boughs among which he resided, but always appeared to have tumbled off, and to be holding on by his hands and feet, and looking at society upside down; and our two gentlemen dreamed, moreover, that there were hung pendent from other boughs of trees, and were supposed to be asleep, but could not really have been so, or they would have dropped off—supposing the laws of gravitation to apply to flying foxes, which is, perhaps, supposing too much—and then they thought that all these things had ceased to be, and had turned into a small brown animal something like a rabbit, but more like a huge rat, concerning which a dream-voice spake, and said:

"This is the Javan Loris, and you will observe that one of its chief peculiarities is, that it does not kill its prey, but eats it alive."

It was quite a comfort to our two sleepy gentlemen to remember in their dream that they were dreaming, for the Javan Loris actually seemed to sit up on its hind-legs, and holding a live mouse in its paw, *took bites out of it*, as a schoolboy does out of an apple.

From these horrible visions Gentlemen Nos. 2 and 4 awoke as the night air blew upon them in emerging from the land of reptiles, and they hastened to tell their dreams to their companions. But what was the worst of it all was, that 1st Gentleman and 3rd Gentleman, who professed to have been awake all this time, were not a bit surprised, and said that they, too, had seen and heard all these things, and that they were not dreams but dire realities. Nos. 2 and 4 were so horrified at their statement, that they expressed a desire to return and sacrifice the Javan Loris on his own hearth; they were, however, not allowed to proceed with this praiseworthy act of retribution.

Truly there is a great deal of suffering mixed up with the lives of most members of the animal creation. What a hideous time of it, for instance, a little fish residing in the same neighbourhood with a large pike must have. Those

great jaws must be a perpetual nightmare to the poor little wretch, who surely has intellect enough to know that he is continually in danger of finding his way into them. How can he enjoy his meals, the society of his friends, his natural rest and sleep, with that long, narrow, dangerous-looking wolf of the waters ever on the spot, ever ready for a pounce?

Do fish ever sleep? They certainly none of them appeared to be in a slumbering condition when Gentlemen 1, 2, and 3, came in the course of their night journey to the watery regions, and surveyed (outrageous combinations of things) the bottom of the sea, by lamp-light, in the Regent's Park. Gentleman No. 4 was left behind at this particular point in the voyage, and was found by the other more active voyagers, when they emerged from the fish regions, sitting bolt upright upon a bench and fast asleep.

There was something almost painful about the bright-eyed wakefulness of those fish. The pike was lying watching the gudgeons, and the gudgeons were wakefully conscious of the pike. The perch and the minnows were going through a performance of the same kind. The roach had quite a red rim round his eyes from want of rest; and even the zoophytes and sea-anemones were making short excursions at the bottom, progressing by means of a kind of ambling movement, compounded of a paralytic hop and a kind of hopeless attempt to swim, ending in a drunken stagger and total collapse of the entire animal into a mass of quivering jelly.

The aggravatingly wakeful condition of the inhabitants of those deep waters, through which our hardy adventurers were now wading, seemed to have upon these three travellers an effect somewhat the reverse of what might have been expected. Far from being refreshed by their bath, or stimulated to wakefulness by the example of these lively animals, our three friends appeared to be suffering under a perfect agony of fatigue and drowsiness, insomuch that they would cling to such under-water plants and other means of support as came in their way, with a drowning man's grasp; would occasionally stagger against each other; would fall into paroxysms of yawning, and would listen to all statements concerning the habits of the race they were among, with a fixed stare, indicative of hatred towards a tribe concerning which so much useful information was obtainable. They all fell foul, however, of No. 4 when they emerged from the bottom of the sea, and said that he ought to be ashamed of the want of interest he was showing in the whole affair.

It was refreshing, after the detestable wakefulness of the fish, to find in the monkey country, which lay next in the route of our travellers, that the inhabitants were an orderly and well-conducted race, and were taking their rest in a natural way, at a natural time. Nervous, too, in the dark, and glad to sit very near each other on their perches. There was one tree which our voyagers passed by on which more than a dozen of these right-minded animals were sitting in a row, packed together like larks

on a spit, and as tight as figs in a drum, the two outermost being evidently selected for their courage, and neither of them appearing to appreciate the distinction at all, while, farther on, a certain old monkey, shut out from this group, and sent to Coventry by his own species, had got hold of a great domestic cat, and was sitting close beside it, the pair being evidently bound to each other by a firm and well-grounded friendship.

" You don't happen to have lost such a thing as a finger ? " said a certain boy in the employment of the Zoological Society, arriving at the house of a gentleman to whom he had been sent to make the above remarkable inquiry.

The gentleman's hand was bound up, and he made answer to the boy :

" Yes, I have, and you may go back to your master and tell him that if he has found it he may put it in spirits, and keep it as a warning to others not to act so foolishly as I have done."

" I had observed the gentleman often enough," said the superintendent, describing the circumstance to the four travellers who had placed themselves under his guidance. " I had observed him, and had often warned him that to play with the bears, as he was in the habit of doing when he came here, was very dangerous ; for he would put his hand into the cage and tease them and play with them as if they were tom cats.

" One day I came to the cage here, and saw lying just outside it, a human finger, with the tendon hanging to it in a long strip. ' It's that gentleman's finger,' I said, ' and he's gone away without saying anything, for he used always to make light of my warnings, and would tell me that he knew all about it, and was not afraid a bit.' And the finger was his, sure enough."

This curious case was not an isolated one. On another occasion, a finger, with the stretched tendon hanging to it in the same way, was found outside the den of the wolves. People will have the temerity to run these foolish risks, and then go away, ashamed, even in the midst of their pain, to own what their rashness has ended in.

The four gentlemen, whose progress we have been following all this time, had moved so quietly about, and had excited so little disturbance among the animals, whose lairs they had passed, that, as far as might be augured from the deep silence reigning over the region inhabited by the great carnivora, their presence and near approach were not guessed at by those grand and terrible animals. The dens which the lions and tigers inhabit have outside them, at a distance of three or four feet, great heavy blinds, which are drawn down at night, and so a narrow passage is formed between the screen and the bars of the den itself : a passage accessible only by a locked gate at one end of it.

A dead silence reigned over all this region as the superintendent, closely followed by the rest of the party, approached this gate, and even after the key had been introduced into the lock ; perhaps the animals were listening now, and

scarcely breathed in order that they might hear the better, but no sooner was the gate thrown open and the gleam of the lantern admitted into the narrow passage in front of the dens, than a yell broke forth of mingled fear and rage, which was the most terrific thing ever heard by any member of the little company.

Still anxious to see more, the four gentlemen and their guides advanced a few paces into the passage. There were two young lions in the cage nearest to them, and the terror and fury of these creatures was really tremendous and awful to behold. They sprang at the sides of the cage, they flung themselves against its bars, they even seemed, in the obscure light, to fly at each other. They shook the place with their roaring, and the bars quivered as they dashed against them.

The contagion, too, seemed to have extended with the lamp's rays farther on, and in an instant the whole of those dens were vibrating with similar sounds. Tigers, leopards, panthers, till altogether into one hideous unbearable yell, till the noise of this and of the shock of weighty bodies crashing against the bars was of so deafening a sort, that it was hardly possible to hear the voice of the guide when he gave the word to those about him that they must leave the place at once, or the creatures might knock themselves to pieces.

And so the cry of " Sauve qui peut ! " went forth, and in another moment the narrow passage before the dens was left once more in darkness, but not in silence : the terror and fury of those disturbed wild beasts being slow to subside, and breaking forth from time to time during the night.

This was the cry of terror spoken of in the introductory portion of this small narrative, which frightened the Regent's Park " from its property."

But for that speedy retreat from before the lions' den there is no telling what injury the terrified and enraged creatures might have done themselves. We know not what terror is, in those unreasoning natures ; he who gave the signal for flight, told his companions that there were some animals of the more timid kinds who could hardly be moved from one place to another, so fearfully would they main themselves in their mad struggles.

The night wanderings of our little party were now nearly over. As they passed on, a startled deer would sometimes jump up from the place where it lay, and, running to a distance, would turn at bay to stare at the unusual apparition. Or, perhaps in some shady enclosure the strange stripes of the zebra would show for a moment as the light of the lantern glanced that way, or the white forms of a group of pelicans would dimly appear in ghostly stillness by the water-side. All, to the last moment—and far more so than in the daytime, when visitors destroy the illusion—spoke of distant lands and regions far removed from civilisation ; and it was almost a shock, so great and violent was the contrast, when at last the four travellers found

themselves taking leave of their guide (with many expressions of their obligation to him), not at the door of a wigwam, or the entrance of a tent, but outside his own pretty little home—in the Regent's Park.

### THE LAST LEWISES.

#### LITTLE CAPET.

A SKILFUL Belgian has painted a very touching picture of a wan, squalid child, crouching and shivering on the ground in the corner of a miserable room. The face is one of those oval French-child faces, very smooth and very yellow, patterns of which we see flitting by us in scores over the Fields Elysian, distracting their screaming and bonnetless bonnes. A French boy's face to the life; wanting only the little frill round its neck, and those other elegancies of dress with which the exquisite taste of French mammas love to invest their offspring. But this French child's face looks out with a piteous stony insensibility. It seems to shrink away from an unseen uplifted hand. Its clothes are torn and ragged: its thin limbs, much shrunk away, protrude. Shown at the Great Dublin Exhibition in 1853, among other notable pictures, it drew succeeding hemicycles of commiserating spectators; faces—of mothers especially—with tearful eyes, sorrowing over that miserable child. The name of the skilful Belgian is Wappers, and a little Bonnet Rouge or French Cap of Liberty, tossed lightly in a corner, tells us who is this boy with the French boy's face: the most unhappy child—taking him in reference to his station—that ever lived; the miserrimus of little ones, the scape-goat of tender years driven out into the desert,—third of our series, and Louis the last but one.

Miserrimus of royal children: the little proto-martyr of kings' sons! This is a piteous distinction; a wretched notoriety. Never did child of a royal line bear so many sorrows. When the courtiers and noble ladies poured in to see him at Versailles on the night of his birth, which took place at "five minutes before seven in the evening"—for events of this character are noted as with a stop-watch—and the cannon was thundering from all the fortresses, and the fireworks were squibbing off in the Place d'Armes, and there was universal delight and congratulation at this fresh introduction of royal flesh and blood into the world—how would that smirking, simpering ruck of fine ladies and gentlemen have been aghast, had it been whispered to them that the splendid infant just arrived, that tender fleur-de-lis whom in a few hours the minister was to invest in all state with the Order of the Holy Ghost, would by-and-by become as the most squalid little Arab of the most squalid quarter of the city, and would give up its persecuted spirit on a stone floor, fairly eaten away with dirt and vermin, its heart worn out with ill-usage and starvation! It would be only natural that the suggestion—besides being ungentle and out of place in a royal palace—should be dismissed as impossible. Poor child! that walked from its cradle, always prattling and

gambolling, and saying pretty things, straight to that hideous destiny. Better had some of the hundred-and-one ogres—croup, whooping-cough, and other ailments, that wait in ambush for children of tender years—burst out and strangled it; even with the result of obliging the noble gentlemen and ladies of the court to exchange their bleu-de-roi and rose-coloured silks for unbecoming sables, and putting them through all the gradations of the "greater and the little grief."

We know this Royal Boy intimately. Even in the horror and agitation of those days of June and August which preceded their removal to the Temple, they thought of making him sit to Monsieur Dumont—the famous miniature painter—and who was besides "Painter in ordinary to the Queen." Turning over the fashionable "Who's who?" of the year—a boastful octavo of vanity, bursting with strings of names and offices, and christened the Royal Almanack—we light upon this gentleman, set out gloriously with all his style and titles. Someway, a reference of this sort, a scrap, a newspaper cutting, brings a period home to us with a greater vitality. It is as though we had sent for the Directory, and were searching out M. Dumont's address with a view to calling on him professionally. His miniature has come down to us; for a marvel having escaped being crunched under the hoof of an "unbreeched." The most lovely chestnut hair, tumbling in profuse ringlets upon his shoulders, large blue eyes of wonderful sweeteness and intelligence, with the rich vermilion lips of his beautiful mother, and a special dimple, for which she was noted, exactly reproduced. He was the child whom ladies would love to call over to them and take on their laps and smother with kisses. His little neck was open with a wide collar, turned over, and a dainty frill; with a diminutive coat and small Robespierrean flaps and buttons. Such a pretty boy! so young, so sweet-tempered, so gracious, so ready and clever! We may be sure gossips marvelled at the absence of the true Bourbon elements, and wondered suspiciously how he could ever come to be shaped into the true and genuine Bourbon type. We, who look back, cannot see the makings of that perfect character, which should develop themselves into the stiff-neckedness, mulishness, insensibility, cruelty, and other virtues which adorn scions of that famous line.

The chronicles of this pretty child's sayings and doings are very full—indeed, are almost Boswellian in their abundance. If we are to trust these note-books, he was making wise, affectionate, smart, and witty speeches all day long. But the truth is, most of these details come from a suspicious direction, being furnished by a sort of dynasty of Valets, whose work must necessarily have a savour of their office. No doubt there were brave and faithful menials about him, from whom was purged away, as by fire, this corrupting influence. Still, Mr. Carlyle cautions us against what he calls men of the valet species, not professionally filling that office, yet who have a crooked flunkey twig tied up with their

bundle of eccentric sticks. Much more should we be on our guard against an original unplated article. There is a valet way of viewing things, an innocent menial exaggeration which magnifies, a gaping pumpkin wonder and consequent distortion, and a gradual gathering of moss as the narrative stone rolls on. The valet historian, become of a sudden the depositary of important facts, finds his details accumulate prodigiously with every fresh recital, and as he grows older, thickens his varnish, and deepens his colours. So was it with the showman at Waterloo; so is it with that ex-valet who now tells and sells his stories at the Invalides. Therefore must we accept these legends of little Capet with a grain of salt.

It must have been a fearfully wise child that at four years old could address its father in a speech of this description: "Papa, I have a fine immortelle in my garden; it will be at once my gift and my compliment. In presenting it to mamma, I shall say, May mamma resemble my flower!" Only conceive, four years old! How his amazed parent must have looked at him as he lisped his way through this elaborate period. Another time—still rising four years—he astounds us by a neat and ingenious turn which should be held up to all ordinary children at their lessons. He was making some strange sounds with his mouth over his task, and was scolded. "Mamma," said the mysterious infant, "I was hissing myself, because I said my lessons so badly." Some one tried to stop him forcing his way through some briars. Opposition was instantly silenced by the reply, "Thorny ways lead to glory!" He fell down on the gravel-walk, and picked himself up with four lines of an apt quotation from La Fontaine. He made puns; checking himself in his intention of bringing some soucis (a species of flower) to his mother, because she had already a sufficiency of them (cares). He was fearfully ready with his classics, and told some one that he was more fortunate than Diogenes, because he had found a man and a good friend. He liked his garden grenadiers (flowers) very much, but would rather be at the head of living grenadiers. He was, in short, a royal "terrible child."

No, this is the valet's child, the changeling of the servants' hall. The poor hapless boy has been so bewailed, talked over, wept over, that he has been actually gossiped into a new shape. There is a handsome margin left for the good and the sympathising, who would weep over the wretched destiny of the most gifted and promising child ever born to a crown.

As a matter of course, he was soon put to take his part in the theatrical shows of the time. The little Royal Red Book alluded to, shows a catalogue of names—crowded as the names of an army list—who form the rank and file of the various "houses" of his majesty, the queen, of Monsieur, and the other persons of "the blood;" and, naturally enough, the little Capet had his share in the show. He was splendidly glorified, this royal bambino, as yet only toddling across the palace saloons, with a whole depart-

ment to himself, labelled "Education of my Lord the Dauphin." He was encumbered with a superfluity of stately supervision, and watched over by a governor-in-chief, two sub-governors, two clerical tutors or "institutors," a reader, a secretary in ordinary, a governess, and four sub-governesses.

We have always some picturesque glimpse of this favoured child. Now we look down at him from the Tuileries windows, pacing his gardens at the head of a tall company of National Guards, he himself a tiny National Guard in a miniature uniform. How comic the contrast between this Tom Thumb Dauphin pacing up and down in his Lilliputian regiments, and the grave giants in the cocked-hats stalking solemnly behind him! He made speeches to these warriors with a quaint old-fashioned ceremoniousness that makes us smile. He apologised for the smallness of his own *private* garden, where he himself was gardener, regretting that its little walks could not accommodate the gentlemen who came to visit him. That fatally precocious wisdom, and strange readiness of speech, somewhat suggest the childish partner in the firm of Dombey and Son.

The Tom Thumb uniform was soon changed, and we see him presently in the full dress of a miniature colonel—Colonel of the Piccol'nomini—or, more respectfully, the Royal Dauphin Regiment. Royal Bonbon, said the French gamins, screaming with laughter, as the little men fluttered their colours, beat drums, saluted, carried arms, and relieved guard at important posts, in a droll parody on their elders. By-and-by this Tom Thumb colonel will appear in other dresses. Alas! not uniforms. He will be looking back with despair in that boy-old age of his, from out of darkness of soul and body, to that mimic coloneling!

Our little Capet was fated to know some troubled nights during his short span of ten years. It seemed to be his destiny to be perpetually awakened from his first sleep towards midnight, and to be snatched from his cot and hurriedly dressed. Or else, where all the elements were raging, and the human storm howling, to be brought out and held up by way of show, to soothe the agitation. On a child's mind those midnight rousings must have left a bewildering impression.

For, indeed, into that ten years which made up his little life were compressed the whole seven ages of man. He saw a kind of copy of youth, of manhood, and the terrible enforced decay of a childish old age. I fancy no life of that duration was ever so crowded with gaudy scenes, horrid nightmare pictures, and snatches of Elysium, all jumbled together in violent contrast! As he shall lie hereafter, shrunk and coiled up in a corner of his dark cell, with a film before his eyes, and brain disordered by disease, literally rotting away, what a company of spectres shall be with him all night long! How the black veil, which always hung before the dark walls, must have parted and floated away to the right and to the left, showing him

ghostly pictures, theatrical tableaux, such as he had often gazed at from the royal box in the Paris theatre! We, too, can see them as well as he.

## TABLEAU FIRST.

A snatch of Elysium! There was surely one happy night to look back to, that in the hall of the theatre at Versailles—that pretty playhouse which strangers and holiday-folk now go down to admire. There has been a weight of care over the great palace, for the monster dungeon has been destroyed; the people are growing strangely insolent and even dangerous; and the little prattling child keeps down its spirits, seeing how dejected and anxious seem the king and queen. When, of that first of October night, he is dressed smartly and taken down with mamma and papa into the theatre, where the newly arrived officers are dining, he goes silent and wondering. What a blaze of light—what cries of joy and enthusiasm; for the officers are all standing up in wild excitement, having sprung to their feet on their entrance, and are shouting “Vive le Roi,” and swearing eternal fidelity. The vision of that beautiful mamma and her children has had much to do with this. They will die for that lovely lady. Down with the vile cockades of the nation, and trample them under foot! The colour has come back to her cheeks—the kingly face smiles benignant. Let us all join—scarlet-coated Swiss, Guard National in the Hogarthian sugar-loaf soldiers’ hats, and officers of the Royal Flanders Regiment—and, drawing swords, drink frantically to our dear sovereigns. I see them all now—in an old print—standing up and pledging that beautiful lady—and I see the orchestra in cocked-hats, high up in a corner, just striking up the sweet air, “O Richard! O my king! though all the world abandon thee!” Halcyon night! We may be sure there was joy and soft serenity up-stairs in the palace bed-chambers as it was talked over. There were sweet tranquil dreams. All would yet be well. We are strong in the love of those dear French hearts!

An ugly twinge of recollection. Four days after, the savage fishwives are storming the splendid palace. They are in the salons, the gardens, everywhere! And then followed the hot, dusty, weary procession to Paris. Then are brought back in triumph the baker, the baker’s wife, and the baker’s boy. Little Dauphin wonders why they should call him a baker’s boy.

## TABLEAU SECOND.

Very often he must have been back again, on that hot June day—twentieth of the month—when he and his little sister noticed that papa and mamma were, whispering, and seemed agitated; and the confidential ladies flitted to and fro, and whispered secretly with their majesties. Sharp, penetrating child as he was, we may be sure he put many penetrating questions to that sub-governess of his, and lady in waiting, who took them out for their five o’clock evening walk. Then, that strange awakening at eleven o’clock, when the lamps were all lighted, and his drowsy eyes scarcely able to keep open, saw the room

full of people, and faces bending over him, and his dear mamma, hurried and agitated, in a travelling-dress. The good Madame Brunier whispers that he is to get up, for they are going a journey, and he is to be very still, like a dear child, for mamma. And here is a little girl’s frock of brown calico, which he is to put on—no matter why, he will be told another time. No wonder he thinks, “They are going to act a comedy.” No matter, he will hear all about it in the morning; and now he is so dreadfully sleepy that he lets his head drop on Madame de Neville’s knees, who has sat down on the stairs; and is dreaming in a moment.

Here is the cool night air and here are the stars, and we are in the Carrousel court. What does it all mean? Here are sentries challenging—and here is the street. Where are we going? Hush, little Aglaé (strange rechristening that!). So he turns round, and in a moment is again asleep on the lady’s shoulder.

In an inflammatory journal of the time—now upon the writer’s shelves—appears a print of this crossing of the Carrousel; coming out within a week of the transaction, as it might be a cut in the Illustrated Paris News. The king has a round “wide-awake” hat and a lantern, the ladies have the pillow-shaped bonnets and pelisses of the time, and the fiacre is seen waiting in the archway with its letter and number conspicuous, “L 16.”

When our little prince opens his eyes again, they are in the huge berline, rumbling and creaking over the rough stones of some highway leading from Paris. It is very dark, and the tall trees lining the road flit by like spectres. Driver’s whip is heard cracking loudly, and we roll and totter forward at a great speed. No wonder; we have six posting-horses attached. Are we indeed going to act a comedy? For here, crowded together inside, are the Baroness Korff and her two daughters (of which you, Aglaé, are one), and her governess, played by mamma, and a lady’s-maid, and a valet, performed by papa. At any other time we might laugh. See, papa has even a passport, with the baroness’s name. (We are told that paper is to be seen to this day; that official document, with the round letters tumbling backwards, and the official writing and the seal, and Louis’s own signature.)

Sleep again! Was there ever such a long night? So chilly, too—such a sense of weary protraction! Now, indeed, we are roused by roar of voices, and lanterns flashing in at the windows, and fierce scowling faces looking so angry, and we can see, too, that mamma is very pale and frightened. It is midnight by the church clock of this little country town that looks so strange, and here we are all getting down, and enter a mean house. Soldiers, crowds, lights, guns, bells ringing, roar—what does it all mean? But we drop off to sleep again, in a corner of the room, for we are very tired, and wake up next morning back again in Paris with the sun shining, at the very gate of the Tuilleries. Still in the great coach, but despair in

mamma's and papa's faces ! A horrid feverish night that we must never think of !

## TABLEAU THIRD.

Again roll away the black dungeon walls; and here are lights, and flowers, and scenes, and gallery over gallery, and a whole sea of faces turned upwards and looking towards the royal box. This night has the king and queen and little prince visited the French comedy. They are playing a piece with a strangely significant title—Unforeseen Events—and from the front of this box the pretty child of six years looks down and laughs and makes his remarks. No doubt the burr and murmurs abroad, the fierce insolent figures, so free with their bold speeches and deportment, who cluster in mobs at the palace gates, and speak to his mother as “The Austrian,” are beginning to weigh upon his little soul and puzzle his brain. But here, to-night, was a strange scene: a house crammed from floor to ceiling, a parterre densely packed, rising to cheer their majesties. Hats and handkerchiefs waving ! Half a dozen voices groan a protest, but are overpowered and driven out by the loyalists. Hark to the comic valet and the soubrette, who are at the foot-lights singing couplets in praise of their master and mistress up-stairs. “Ah !” they join in the burden :

“ Surely we must make them happy !  
Surely we must make them happy ! ”

and the pit is on its feet cheering and vociferating “Yes ! yes !”

Something very sweet in this night of romance—the lights, the music, that delicious rapture of our subjects—to send us home with tears of joy. Royal mamma and papa, supremely happy, dream that all may yet be well.

## TABLEAU FOURTH.

The horrid day of the twentieth June, when the red-capped “breechless” poured in with pikes, and flooded the palace—he would shut that out, if possible—when there was the crash of doors broken in, and the royal lady, clutching him to her arms, is hunted from chamber to chamber—sliding panels—secret passages—and a howling mob outside !—when, too, a table was drawn in front of her as a feeble barrier against the frantic human waves pouring in at the door. A roar, and the vile red cap is upon that noble lady’s flowing hair : another roar, and a cry of “Little Veto !” and that decoration is upon his own head ! Pikes flourish in the air, wild women come up to her mother and shake their closed fists in her face. Savage men gather round him and question him, and he gives them his quaint answers. So it rolls on, wearily, anxiously, until night, when the waters recede slowly, and the palace is at peace. Close, in a disordered sequence, follow other terrible days : this rousing of him at midnight by beating of drums and tocsin, and the great bells ringing far and wide over Paris, as for fire, and the woman rushing in and dressing him hurriedly. Not without a shudder can he think of that awful daybreak. The messengers hurrying in with news that all is lost, and that the king must die,

and of that sad procession when he was carried in the grenadier’s arms, and heard the air rent with the cries “Death to the tyrant !” As he looks back over the grenadier’s shoulder, he sees the smoke from the windows, and through the smoke the scarlet coats of his father’s Swiss, and cannon lumbering by him with fierce men in blouses and the eternal red cap, tugging them on with ropes. Then the interminable day, cramping in the little box in the Assembly, with myriads of hostile faces glaring on them, the stifling overpowering heat, the shots outside, the periodical eruption of savage men, all smirched and bloody, their hands full of rich gold and silver, plundered from papa’s palace. But it comes to an end, like other long weary days we shudder to think of ; and then the black pall rolls its dismal folds over all !

We are most of us familiar, by aid of Valet Cléry’s touching narrative and M. Duchesne’s researches, with the stages of that martyrdom of the little St. Louis. We know the minutest details of that frightful persecution, the degradation of mind and body, that masquerading in the red cap, that drugging of him with strong spirits, that forcing upon his innocent tongue vile street songs and licentious ballads. Nay, there are yet to be seen those shaking trembling signatures, wrung from him by a fearful terrorism ; and even the tailor’s bills, for furnishing “the son of Capet” with “striped Pekin” waistcoats, and the “ells of superfine cloth” for a coat. These little records, like Mr. Filby’s bills, recovered for us by Mr. Forster, touch us more than volumes of description. We may follow the steps of his sufferings, with a minuteness unparalleled in the history of jails. We have a secret yet unsubstantial trust that there has been some exaggeration. We take one glimpse at that piteous picture, which somehow comes home to our hearts nearest of all, when the child was discovered at midnight kneeling on his pallet, and praying in his dreams, in a sort of divine rapture ; and when the savage who guarded him came with a pail of water and so brought him back to life, and sent him crouching and cowering into a corner. Was he dreaming of the celestial palaces, and of that dear papa and mamma whom his affectionate heart had already enthroned there, and who were holding out their arms to him from those happy sunny gardens where there would be no more terrible days of blood, and wild savage men and cruel jailors ?

The end and a happy delivery came speedily. Joyful days, long wished-for, came about, when a slow wasting away and lassitude set in, and his strength gave way, and his gentle spirit was beaten in the struggle. During those hours kind voices whispered to him, kind faces bent over him, and smoothed his pillow. On that last day, a little after noon, he heard a sort of divine music filling the room ; then, looking eagerly towards the full light streaming in at the window, called to his keeper that he had

something to tell him. The keeper bent down and listened; but the head was sinking gently, lower and yet lower, upon the young breast; and the spirit of the little Capet had sped to where the wicked cease to trouble and the weary find repose.

### UNDERGROUND LONDON.

#### CHAPTER III.

BLUE-BOOKS on sewers, like most blue-books, are very solid instructive volumes, not half as much appreciated as they deserve to be, and too often made the easy butt of mechanical and uninquiring ridicule. Able, friendly sewer engineers and obliging secretaries are always crammed to overflowing with special information, and are always ready to be tapped to enlighten the public. Reports, pamphlets, letters, hints—cyclopedias that are learned upon cloacæ in general, and enthusiastic about the Roman Cloaca Maxima in particular, with a dozen other similar documents and publications—are not to be despised; but, in dealing with underground London as if determined to know something about it, there is nothing like a long, dark, sloppy, muddy survey.

On applying to the proper authorities, I was obligingly told that they had not the slightest objection to gratify what they evidently thought a very singular taste. I was even asked to name my sewer. They could favour me with an extensive choice. I might choose from about one hundred and seventy miles of legally constituted "main" sewers, running through some hundred and eighty outlets into the Thames; or, if I liked to trespass upon "district" and "private" sewers, they could put me through about sixteen hundred miles of such underground tunnels. They had blood-sewers—a delicate article—running underneath meat markets, like Newport-market, where you could wade in the vital fluid of sheep and oxen; they had boiling sewers, fed by sugar-bakeries, where the steam forced its way through the gratings in the roadway like the vapour from the hot springs in Iceland, and where the sewer-cleaners get Turkish baths at the expense of the rate-payers. They had sewers of various orders of construction—egg-shaped, barrel-shaped, arched, and almost square; and they had sewers of different degrees of repulsiveness, such as those where manufacturing chemists and soap and candle-makers most do congregate. They had open rural sewers that were fruitful in watercresses; and closed town sewers whose roofs are thickly clustered with what our scientific friends call "edible fungi." The choice was so varied that it was a long time before I could make up my mind, and I decided, at last, upon exploring the King's Scholars' Pond Sewer, which commences in the Finchley New Road, and ends in the Thames a little above Vauxhall-bridge.

If the literary executors of the late Mr. Leigh Hunt had not cut the ground from under me in the title of a book just published, I might possibly have called this chapter A Saunter

through the West-End. We have all our different ways of looking at London. The late Mr. Crofton Croker had his way, as he has shown in his Walk from London to Fulham; and I have mine.

Sewer-cleaners are a class of workmen who seldom come prominently before the public. They have never made any particular noise in the world, although they receive in London every year about five and twenty thousand pounds sterling of public money. Their wages, individually, may average a pound a week. They have never distinguished themselves by producing any remarkable "self-made men," any Lord Chancellors, or even Lord Mayors; and have never attempted, as a class, to "raise themselves in the social scale." They are good, honest, hard-working underground labourers, who often meet extreme danger in the shape of foul gases, and sometimes die at their posts—as we saw the other day in the Fleet-lane sewer.

Some half-dozen of these men, with a foreman of flushers, attended me on the day I selected for my underground survey. They were not lean yellow men, with backs bent by much stooping, and hollow coughs produced by breathing much foul air. Their appearance was robust; and, as I measured bulk with one or two of them, I had no reason to be proud of any superior training.

There seems to be only one costume for underground or underwater work, and the armour necessary for sewer-inspecting will do for lobster-catching on the coast, or for descending in a sea diving-bell. The thick worsted stockings coming up to the waist, the heavy long greased boots of the seven league character, the loose blue shirt, and the fan-tailed hat, may be very hot and stifling to wear, but no sewer inspector is considered properly fortified without them.

There is a fatal fascination about sewers; and, whenever a trap-door side entrance is opened, a crowd is sure to gather about the spot. The entrance to the King's Scholars' Pond Main Sewer, that I decided to go down by, is close to the cab-stand at St. John's-wood Chapel, and twenty cabmen were so much interested in seeing me descend with my guides, that the offer of a fare would have been resented as an annoying interruption.

"Rather him than me; eh, Bill?" said one.

"That beats cab-drivin'," said another.

The side entrance is a square brick-built shaft, having a few iron rings driven into two of its sides. These rings form the steps by which you ascend and descend, putting your foot on one as you seize another. I felt like a bear in the pit at the Zoological Gardens, as I descended in this fashion; and I dare say many respectable members of parochial-sewer-committees have gone through the same labour, and have experienced the same feeling. Before the iron trap-door over us was closed by the two men left to follow our course above ground, I caught a glimpse of a butcher's boy looking down the shaft, with his mouth wide open. When the daylight was shut out, a closed lantern was put in my hand. I was led stooping along a short

yellow-bricked passage, and down a few steps, as if going into a wine-cellar, until I found myself standing knee-deep in the flowing sewer.

The tunnel here is about four feet high, and six feet broad; being smaller higher up towards the Finchley New Road, and growing gradually larger as it descends in a winding course towards the Thames. All main sewers may be described roughly, as funnel-shaped; the narrow end being at the source in the hills; the broad end being in the valley, where it discharges into the river. The velocity of their currents varies from one to three miles an hour. The most important of them discharge, at periods of the day, in dry weather, from one thousand to two thousand cubic feet of sewage per minute, the greatest height being generally maintained during the hours between nine in the morning and five in the afternoon. At other periods of the day the same sewers rarely discharge more than one-fourth of this quantity. The sizes of these underground tunnels, at different points of their course, are constructed so that they may convey the waters flowing through them with no prospect of floods and consequent bursting, and yet with no unnecessary waste of tunnelling. Here it is that the science of hydraulic engineering is required.

Turning our face towards the Thames, we waded for some time, in a stooping posture, through the sewer; three of my guides going on first with lanterns, and two following me. We passed through an iron tube, which conveys the sewage over the Regent's Canal; and it was not until we got into some lower levels, towards Baker-street, that the sewer became sufficiently large to allow us to stand upright.

Before we arrived at this point I had experienced a new sensation. I had had an opportunity of inspecting the earthenware pipe drain—I am bound to say, the very defective pipe drainage—of a house that once owned me as a landlord. I felt as if the power had been granted me of opening a trap-door in my chest, to look upon the long-hidden machinery of my mysterious body.

When we got into a loftier and broader part of the tunnel, my chief guide offered me his arm: an assistance I was glad to accept, because the downward flood pressed rather heavily against the back of my legs, and the bottom was ragged and uncertain. I could not deny myself the pleasure of calling this chief guide, Agrippa, because Agrippa is a Roman name, and the Romans have earned an immortality in connexion with sewers. Whatever doubts the sceptical school of historians may throw upon the legends of Roman history, they cannot shake the foundations of the Roman sewers. Roman London means a small town, bounded on the East by Walbrook, and on the West by the Fleet. You cannot touch upon sewers without coming upon traces of the Romans; you cannot touch upon the Romans without meeting with traces of sewers. The most devoted disciple of Niebuhr must be dumb before such facts as these, and must admit that

these ancient people were great scavengers, as well as great heroes.

Agrippa took a real pleasure in pointing out to me the different drains, private sewers, and district sewers, which at intervals of a few yards opened into our channel through the walls on either side.

"We've nothin' to do with the gover'ment of any of these," he said; "they are looked after, or had ought to be looked after, by the parochial boards."

"You look after branches?" I replied.

"Only when they're branches of prop'ly construed main sewers. We," he continued, and he spoke like a chairman, "are the Metropolitan Board of Works, and we should have enough to do if we looked after every drain-pipe in London."

"What's the length of those drain-pipes all over London," I asked, "leaving out the sewers?"

"No one knows," he said. "They do tell me somewhere about four thousand miles, and I should say they *were* all that."

We went tottering on a little further, with the carriages rumbling on the roadway over our heads. The splashing of the water before and behind us, as it was washed from side to side by the heavy boots of all our party, added to the noise; and when our above-ground followers let the trap-door of some side entrance fall, a loud booming sound went through the tunnel, as if a cannon had been fired. The yellow lights of the lanterns danced before us, and when we caught a glimpse of the water we were wading in above our knees, we saw that it was as black as ink. The smell was not at all offensive, and Agrippa told me that no man, during his experience in the London sewers, had ever complained of feeling faint while he moved about or worked in the flood; the danger was found to consist in standing still. For all this assurance of perfect comfort and safety, however, my guides kept pretty close to me; and I found out afterwards that they were thus numerous and attentive because the "amateur" sewer inspector was considered likely to drop.

"There," said Agrippa, pointing to a hole at the side, down which a quantity of road sand had been washed, "that's a gully-trap. People get a notion that heavy rains pour down the gutters and flush the sewers; for my part, I think they bring quite as much rubbish as they clear away."

At different parts of our course we passed through the blue rays of light, like moonlight, that came down from the ventilator gratings in the highway above. While under one of these we heard a boy whistling in the road, and I felt like Baron Trenck escaping from prison. Some of these gratings over our heads were stopped up with road rubbish; and Agrippa, who carried a steel gauging-rod, like a sword, in his hand, pierced the earth above us, and let in the outer light and air.

"They're nice things," he said, alluding to the ventilating gratings, generally set in the top of a shaft-hole cut in the crown of the arch.

"I remember the time when we'd none of those improvements; no side entrances, no nothing. When we wanted to get down to cleanse or look at a sewer, we had to dig a hole in the roadway, and sometimes the men used to get down and up the gully-holes to save trouble."

"You must have had many accidents in those days?"

"Hundreds, sir, were suffocated or killed by the gas; but since Mr. Roe\* brought about these improvements, and made the sewers curve instead of running zigzag, we've been pretty safe."

The "gas" alluded to by Agrippa includes carburetted hydrogen, sulphuretted hydrogen, and carbonic acid gas. The first is highly inflammable, easily explodes, and has frequently caused serious accidents. The second is the gaseous product of putrid decomposition; it is slightly inflammable, and its inhalation, when it is strong, will cause sudden death. The third is the choke-damp of mines and sewers, and its inhalation will cause a man to drop as if shot dead. These are the unseen enemies which Agrippa and his fellows have constantly to contend against, more or less.

As we staggered further down the stream, it was evident that Agrippa had his favourites among the district sewers. Some he considered to be "pretty" sewers; others he looked upon as choked winding channels, not fit to send a rat up to cleanse, much less a Christian man. Looking up some of these narrow openings with their abrupt turns, low roofs, and pitch-black darkness, it certainly did seem as if sewer-cleansing must be a fearful trade. The sewer rats, much talked of aboveground, were not to be seen; and their existence in most of the main sewers is a tradition handed down from the last century. Since the improved supply of water, which is said to give to every dweller in London, man, woman, and child, a daily allowance of forty gallons per head, the rats have been washed away by the increased flood.

Although underground, we passed over the metropolitan railway in the New-road, and then along the line of Baker-street, under Oxford-street, and through Berkeley-square. This aristocratic neighbourhood was loudly announced to us by our aboveground followers, down an open "man-hole;" but there was nothing in the construction of our main sewer, or in the quality of our black flood, to tell us that we were so near the abodes of the blest. Looking up the "man-hole," an opening in the road, not unlike the inside of a tile-kiln chimney, down which some workmen had brought a flushing-gate, I saw another butcher's boy gazing down upon us with his mouth wide open.

The flushing-gate was an iron structure, the exact width of the sewer, and about half its height. These gates are fixed on hinges at the sides of all the main sewers at certain distances from each other; and when they are

closed by machinery, they dam up the stream, producing an artificial fall of water, and so scouring the bed of the sewer.

As we got lower down our great underground channel, the roof became higher and higher, and the sides broader and broader; but the flooring, I am sorry to say, became more jagged and uneven. The lower bricks had been washed out, leaving great holes, down which one or other of my legs kept slipping at the hazard of my balance and my bones. We peeped up an old red-bricked long-disused branch sewer, under some part of Mayfair, that was almost blocked up to the roof with mountains of black dry earthy deposit. Not even here did we see any traces of rats, although the sewer was above the level of the water in our main channel. The King's Scholars' Pond (so Agrippa told me) has had five feet of water in it, at this point, during storms; but this was not its condition then, or we should hardly have been found wading there. The bricks in this old Mayfair sewer were as rotten as gingerbread; you could have scooped them out with a teaspoon.

In Piccadilly we went up the side entrance, to get a mouthful of fresh air and a glimpse of the Green Park, and then went down again to finish our journey. I scarcely expect to be believed, but I must remark that another butcher's boy was waiting with open mouth, watching every movement we made, with intense interest.

We had not proceeded much further in our downward course, when Agrippa and the rest of the guides suddenly stopped short, and asked me where I supposed I was now?

"I give it up," I replied.

"Well, under Buckingham Palace," was the answer.

Of course my loyalty was at once excited, and taking off my fan-tailed cap, I led the way with the National Anthem, insisting that my guides should join in chorus. Who knows but what, through some untrapped drain, that rude underground melody found its way into some inner wainscoting of the palace, disturbing some dozing maid of honour with its mysterious sounds, and making her dream of Guy Fawkes and many other subterranean villains? Before I leave this deeply-interesting part of the King's Scholars' Pond Sewer, I may as well say that I am fully alive to its importance as the theatre of a thrilling romance. That no writer of fiction may poach upon preserves which I have made my own, I will state exactly what kind of story I intend to write, as soon as I have got rid of a row of statistics that are beckoning to me in the distance. My hero will run away with one of the Royal Princesses, down this sewer, having first hewn a passage up into the palace through its walls. The German Prince, who is always going to marry the Royal Princess, whether she likes him or not, will be murdered in mistake by a jealous sewer-flusher, the villain of the story; and the hero having married the Princess at some bankside church, will live happily with her ever afterwards, as a superintendent of one of the outfall sewers. If this story should meet

\* The late Mr. Roe, for many years surveyor to the Holborn and Finsbury Commissioners of Sewers.

with the success I anticipate, I promise to raise some memorial tablet in the sewer under the palace, to mark my gratitude and the royalty of the channel. If any reader think the mechanical part of this story impossible, let me tell him that two friends of mine once got into the vaults of the House of Commons through the sewers.

Soon after we left this spot, we came upon a punt that had been poled thus far up the stream to meet us, and carry us down to the Thames. I took my seat with Agrippa, while the other guides pushed at the sides and stern of the boat, and I thought this was a good time to put a few questions to the men about the treasures usually found in the sewers. The journey was wanting in that calmness, light, and freshness, which generally characterise boat voyages; and while there was a good deal of Styx and Charon about it in imagination, there was a close unpleasant steam about it in reality. Still, for all this, it furnished an opportunity not to be thrown away, and I at once addressed Agrippa.

"Well," he said, "the most awful things we ever find in the sewers is dead children. We've found at least four of 'em at different times; one, somewhere under Notting-hill; another, somewhere under Marybone; another, at Paddington; and another at the Broadway, Westminster."

"We once found a dead seal," struck in one of the men pushing the boat.

"Ah," continued Agrippa, "so we did. That was in one of the Westminster sewers—the Horseferry-road outlet, I think, and they said it had been shot at Barnes or Mortlake, and had drifted down with the tide. We find musshrooms in great quantities on the roof, and icicles as well growing amongst 'em."

"Icicles!" I said; "why, the sewers are warm in winter. How do you account for that?"

"I don't mean what *you* call icicles," he replied. "I mean those white greasy-looking things, like spikes of tallow."

"Oh, stalactites," I said.

"Yes," he answered, "that's the word. We sometimes find live cats and dogs that have got down untrapped drains after house-rats; but these animals, when we pick 'em up, are more often dead ones."

"They once found a live hedgehog in Westminster," said another of the men. "I've heard tell on it, but I didn't see it myself."

"Of course," continued Agrippa, confidentially, "a good deal may be found that we never hear of, but there's lots of little things picked up, and taken to the office. We've found lots of German silver and metal spoons; iron tobacco-boxes; nails, and pins; bones of various animals; bits of lead; boys' marbles, buttons, bits of silk, scrubbing-brushes, empty-purses; penny-pieces, and bad half-crowns, very likely thrown down the gullies on purpose."

"We've found false teeth—whole sets at a

time," said one of the men, "'specially in some of the West-end shores."

"Ah," continued Agrippa, "and corks; how about corks? I never see such a flood of corks, of all kinds and sizes, as sometimes pours out of this sewer into the Thames. Of course we find bits of soap, candle-ends, rags, seeds, dead rats and mice, and a lot of other rubbish. We enter these things in our books, now and then, but we're never asked to bring 'em afore the Board."

"Do any thieves, or wanderers, get into the sewers," I asked, "and try to deprive you of these treasures?"

"Very few, now-a-days," he replied. "Some of 'em creep down the side entrances when the doors are unlocked, or get up some of the sewers on this side when the tide is low, under the idea that they're going to pick up no end of silver spoons. They soon find out their mistake; and then they take to stealing the iron traps off the drains."

By this time our bark had floated out of the broad archway of the sewer—an arch as wide as any bridge-arch on the Regent's Canal, and we were anchored in that pea-soup-looking open creek that runs for some distance along the side of the Equitable Gas Works at Pimlico. The end of this creek, where it enters the Thames, is closed with tidal gates which are watched by a kind of sewer lock-keeper who lives in a cottage immediately over the sewer. He cultivates flowers and vegetables at the side of the channel, and his little dwelling is a model of cleanliness and tasteful arrangement. His health is good, and he seems satisfied with his peculiar position; for, instead of reading pamphlets on sewers and sewage-poison in the intervals of business, he cultivates game-cocks, and stuffs dead animals in a very creditable manner:

He dwells amongst the untrodden ways  
Beside the spring of Dove—  
A spring that very few can praise,  
And not a soul can love!

Let us hope that the sewer-doctors and their theories will never reach him, or they might painfully disturb his mind.

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